

*Creating a
Good Environment
for
Learning*



1954 Yearbook

ASSOCIATION FOR SUPERVISION AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

A department of the National Education Association
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ASSOCIATION FOR SUPERVISION AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES

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From the Association

A learning environment is people and things all inextricably woven together. That is the belief of the committee which prepared this yearbook of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. A good environment for learning does not just happen; it is *created*. That is another belief of the committee, which has gathered and interpreted for us these accounts of teachers trying to improve the learning environment in our schools. A good environment for learning is created *in terms of values*—the goals adults have for the generation growing up. That is the philosophy back of the committee's insightful analysis of the problem of patterning a setting in which children and youth have the best chance to learn to use and enjoy their membership in a free society.

Like all of our Association's committees, the Committee for the 1954 Yearbook has used teamwork. Robert Gilchrist, the genial and able chairman, tells the story of his group's approach to cooperative writing in his introduction which follows. Like other yearbook committees, this one has put much thought and effort into ways of catching and holding the attention of busy readers. We must agree that the committee has succeeded in creating a good environment for its important message to us.

This book is addressed to the wide audience represented in ASCD. The committee has put emphasis on the teacher's part in creating a good learning environment. That is well, for teachers are closest to the learners in school and are themselves an influential part of the educational environment. There are many implications also for those who work with teachers, helping them to create the conditions and arrange the surroundings in which learning is encouraged. Parents will be given much to think about in planning a home environment and helping to plan a school setting that will provide enough consistency to promote continuity in learning and enough difference to challenge young people to seek to extend their learnings. All who pay a share of the bill for schools will benefit from this report on the educative uses made of the buildings, equipment and materials provided.

In accepting this yearbook from the committee, with all the hours of creative thought and hard work such a volume represents,

we of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development are thankful once more for the spark that drives men to do for other men. It is not only to the committee that we owe thanks but to many other members and nonmembers who contributed suggestions, carefully written examples and photographic illustrations. All of us know, too, that such a carefully edited yearbook could not come to us without the devotion beyond normal working hours of our executive secretary, George W. Denemark, and of our associate secretary in charge of publications, Robert R. Leeper, who also directed final production of this volume. We are grateful also to the art department of the National Education Association and to its staff artist, Mrs. de Graffenried W. List, for designing the cover and title page. Technical assistance in making up this book in final form was given by the following members of the Editorial Unit of the NEA Publications Division: Jesse S. Cowdrick, Florence O. Skuce and Gertrude L. Warner. Through all this joining of hands, our Association has produced a worthy successor to a long line of yearbooks that we may judge valuable because they have helped to keep American education moving ahead.

*ALICE MIEL, President
For the Executive Committee*

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Why and How This Book Was Written

In the spring of 1951, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development Executive Committee decided that the 1954 yearbook might well focus its attention on the problems involved in creating a good environment for learning.

The yearbook chairman, after consultation with the executive secretary and chairman of the Publications Committee of ASCD, invited Chandos Reid, Fair Lawn, New Jersey, Public Schools; Fannie R. Shaftel, Stanford University; Amo DeBernardis, Portland, Oregon, Public Schools; and Robert S. Fleming, University of Tennessee—representing various sections of the country—to work with him as the Steering Committee for developing the yearbook. At the Boston Convention in February 1952, these four individuals and the chairman developed an over-all plan for the yearbook. They agreed that each should act as a chairman for a different part of the volume.

In the Boston discussions, and again in Cleveland at the time of the 1953 ASCD Convention, we of the Steering Committee and additional members of the Yearbook Committee tried to envision the kind of yearbook that would be most helpful to supervisors and other educators. We felt that it would be impossible to put into a single book the excellent foundation materials available on learning, child growth and development, the nature and needs of present-day society, and other subjects closely related to the creation of a good environment for learning. Through publications already available, educators can keep up to date on literature in these areas. We decided that the 1954 yearbook should describe the processes by which teachers, with the help of others, can obtain good learning environments.

We, of course, wanted the yearbook to be challenging and to be practical. We agreed, therefore, that the first half of the book should consist of case studies of the efforts of some teachers to create good learning environments, and the second half, an analysis of techniques for improving learning environments. Although names and places used are fictitious, each incident reported in the stories actually has taken place. This fact should assure the reader that the book deals with real problems which teachers face day by day. The Yearbook Committee does not necessarily subscribe to the soundness of every educational practice described in

the stories. These case studies are included, however, in order to show that a teacher with enthusiasm, vision and a spirit of service will find the means of improving the conditions which affect learning.

Everyone on the Yearbook Committee recognizes the great importance of the three R's, moral and spiritual values, and other worthy objectives of American education. We wish we had had sufficient time and space to develop in detail some "best practices" we believe schools should follow in order to achieve these objectives to the fullest. In the limited space of this yearbook, however, it seemed important for us to confine our efforts to an emphasis on the importance of creating an environment in which the atmosphere, the morale and the conditions will be conducive to effective learning.

This yearbook stresses the expanded role which present-day supervisors must assume as they help teachers grow in teaching effectiveness and in all phases of instructional leadership. The enlarged responsibilities of the supervisor include work with lay citizens and educators in helping them understand the conditions essential to producing a good learning environment.

Pictures, marginal comments and a selected bibliography are features of the yearbook which the committee hopes will add to its readability and usefulness. The Yearbook Committee hopes that in reading the book many people will be encouraged to turn to other sources in search of ways to create better environments for learning.

It would be impossible for the Yearbook Committee to acknowledge all of the contributions which it has secured in preparation of this volume. Many people have been most generous in their help.

Consultants from whom committee members secured advice include: Stanley Applegate, Manhasset, New York, Public Schools; Mary Cannon, Henry County, Tennessee, Schools; Bertis E. Capehart, Oak Ridge, Tennessee, City Schools; Arthur P. Coladarci, Stanford University; Persis H. Cowan, Marin, California, County Schools; Harry Haworth, Pasadena, California, City Schools; Louise Hock, Teachers College, Columbia University; Clarence W. Hunnicutt, Syracuse University; Arthur Jersild, Teachers College, Columbia University; Lucile Lurry, Prince George's County, Mary-

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Public school systems which provided pictures were Baltimore, Maryland; Denver, Colorado; Fair Lawn, New Jersey; Hagerstown, Maryland; Manhasset, New York; New York, New York; Oak Ridge, Tennessee; Osage School, Henry County, Tennessee; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Portland, Oregon; Prince George's County, Maryland; Springfield, Missouri; and the following Los Angeles County, California, School Districts: Alhambra City, Bloomfield, Burbank, Duarte, Glendale City, Little Lake, Long Beach City, Los Nietos, Montebello, Pasadena, and Temple; and the Office of the Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools. The Standard Oil Company of New Jersey provided several of the pictures. Earl Strobehn of the Oak Ridge Schools photographed the pictures for one of the stories and one of the chapters.

We are very grateful to *Childhood Education*, official journal of the Association for Childhood Education International, for permission to use one of the photographs appearing in this book.

We are indebted to Mrs. Frederick N. Pauly, a patron of the Pasadena City Schools, for reading the entire manuscript and giving us her reactions as a parent.

The story in Chapter V, "A Slow-Learning Group in a Large City Senior High School," appears in the yearbook through the courtesy of the Horace-Mann Lincoln Institute of School Experimentation, Teachers College, Columbia University.

School systems which employ those who worked on the yearbook contributed immeasurably to its successful completion. They made it possible for staff members and secretaries to devote time to this project. The many secretaries who were involved in developing the yearbook deserve special commendation.

The yearbook chairman wishes especially to acknowledge the fine spirit of teamwork and cooperation of all those who took part in the actual development of this volume. Those on the Year-

book Committee were involved in writing, revising or editing and also in the planning of the yearbook. Those listed as contributors wrote stories or participated in the writing of chapters in Part II.

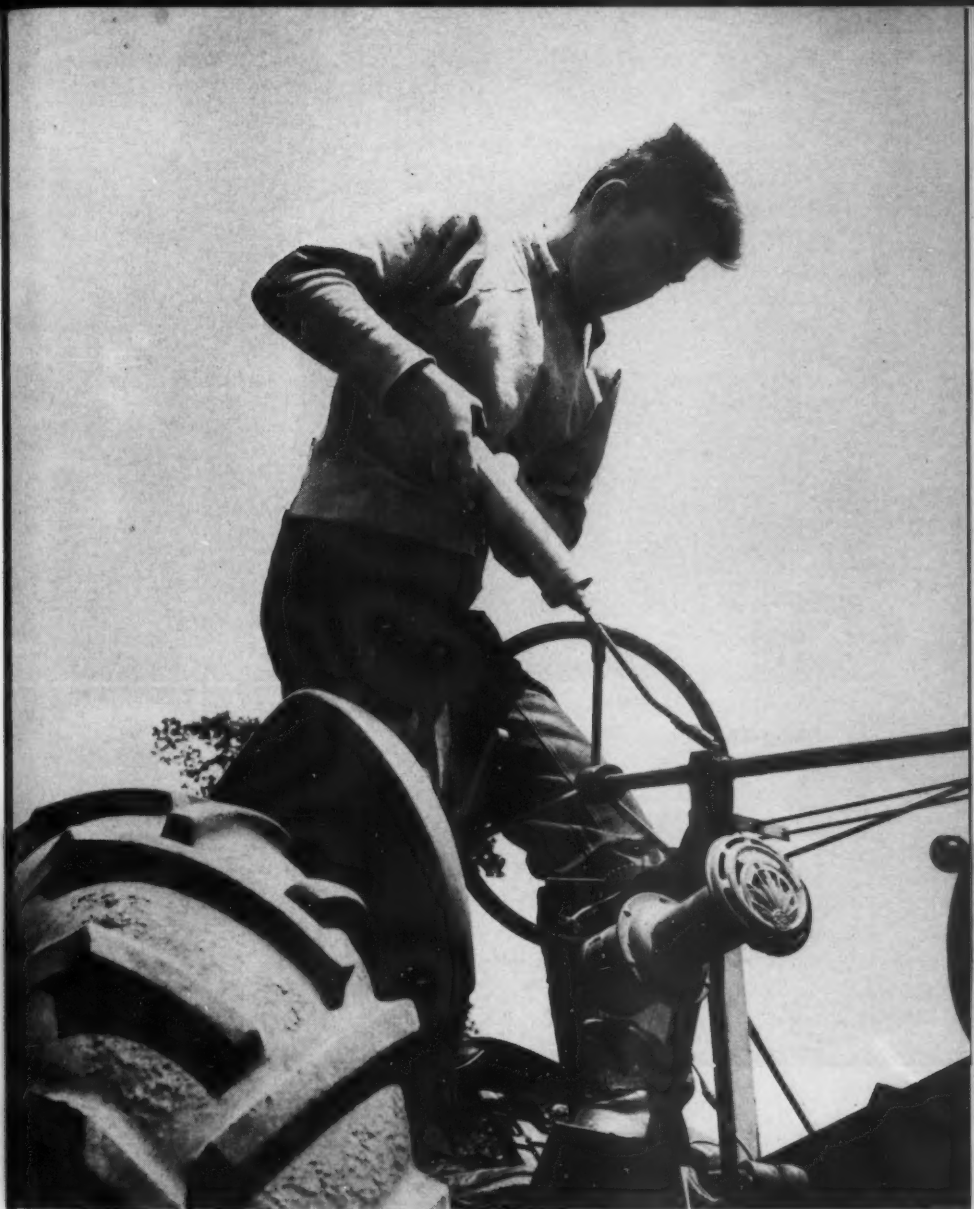
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What This Book Is About

This is a book about people—about Alec who goes to high school.



About Henry who is conquering
junior high.

About Susan who has
just learned to read.

It is a book about all the people
and places and things with which
they come in contact. It is a book
about the learning environment.





Many People, Many Factors Make Up the Learning Environment

The learning environment is the atmosphere one senses as he approaches a school or looks in at the open door of a classroom. Everything he experiences, everyone he meets constitutes a learning environment. The value of such an environment can be judged by the attitudes and feelings of the learners themselves and of teachers who are so much a part of the learners' experiences.



Children and Young People Are Eager To Learn

If the atmosphere of a school is friendly, free from pressures and strains, yet busy and purposeful, we are aware of a good learning environment. If children's voices are happy, we know that the environment is likely to be a good one. If children are eager to get to school in the morning and reluctant to leave in the afternoon, we have another evidence of a good learning environment. If they ask thoughtful questions and search for more and more of the knowledge which they are testing in the school, then we know that the school is developing a good environment for learning. It is natural for children to want to learn.

Parents and teachers watch the small child reaching out to learn—avidly examining, manipulating all that is within his grasp. They know that somewhere along the way, without wise guidance he is likely to lose this spontaneous joy in learning and discovering. It is with ways of keeping this eagerness alive that this book concerns itself.



Every Environment Is a Learning Environment

Every environment becomes a part of the individuals who are within it. The best learning environment is the one which stimulates the individual to reach constantly for new horizons, new understandings, new experiences; to ask questions as eagerly at forty as at four. It is the task of the teacher to create such an environment for learning.

Creating a good learning environment is an on-going, active, changing process. Evaluation is a part of that process—a continuous questioning of what is there, what effect it has on the learner, and how that effect can be improved.

No environment in itself is good or bad. It is good or bad, effective or ineffective, only in terms of response to it. We must, therefore, examine the people, places and things which surround the student, not in terms of their own intrinsic worth, but rather in terms of his reactions to them. As we examine young people's reactions to their environments, we shall find the clues which help us know how to create a better learning environment.



Teachers Tell Their Stories

Rather than attempting to picture the ideal learning environment, we have collected real stories of real teachers who have worked to improve the learning environment for the children whom they teach. Few of the teachers have had an ideal situation; most of them began work in a rather meager setting. However, each has had help from the supervisors and administrators with whom he has worked. Each one has assessed the situation and begun on those things which he felt could be done. Some have changed the physical environment; some have emphasized the human values. Some have stayed in the classroom itself; others have moved into community activities. Each one began, a single step at a time, to improve the environment for learning.



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People Are Important

There is no doubt that people are most important in the learning environment. The learner is dependent upon teachers, principals, parents and friends for ideas, attitudes and opinions. He may ask such questions as these:

- Is the principal friendly?
- What does the teacher expect of me?
- What will "they" think of me if I can't answer?
- Do my classmates like me?
- How does my teacher feel about me?
- Why can't I be as good in school as my brother?



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Places and Things Are Important

A child responds to the places in which he finds himself and the things which surround him, as well as to people. Places can be frightening or friendly. Things can be interesting or uninteresting. The learner reacts with many questions.

Is my classroom attractive?

Are there interesting things to look at?

Do I feel at home in the school?

Are books and displays inviting?

Do we have equipment for experiments?

Is there a chance to make things?



Experiences Are Important

No single event has the same meaning for any two learners in the classroom. Each brings reactions from all the contacts he has made and all the things which he is seeking at any given time. Any new experience will be examined in terms of the learner's relation to it and how he sees himself involved in it.

Do I have a share in determining what we do and how we do it?

What is the pattern of our day's activity?

Is it easy to get the materials we need?

Does school make us feel successful?

Do the experiences I am having seem important?



Evaluation Is Important

The teacher must evaluate both student reactions and the potentialities of the learning environment. He must be willing to meet the problems revealed. In creating a good learning environment through evaluation, the teacher fills many roles:

Listening to reactions of students

Looking for ways to use the existing situation creatively

Making sure that the environment is stimulating

Providing for a wide range of effective learning experiences

Assessing what is there, then planning ways to improve it

Planning systematic observation of student behavior.



The Supervisor Helps Create a Good Learning Environment

The role of the supervisor is no longer that of inspection. It is rather that of helping the teacher, and doing for and with the teacher many things which the teacher cannot do by himself. In creating a good learning environment, the supervisor may well assume the following roles:

- Aiding teachers in setting definite goals
- Assisting in providing materials and resources which will help teachers carry out their own plans
- Planning with teachers for new projects
- Helping students who have been sent to him for advice or interview or materials
- Coming to the class or meeting when called or needed
- Taking part in meetings as a member of the group
- Providing leadership in professional growth.

Unusual Resources Are Listed

The final section of this book is a bibliography which lists audio-visual materials, books and pamphlets dealing with the levels of education treated in the 1954 Yearbook. They have been grouped under the following nine classifications relating to the development of a good learning environment:

- Understanding the Child
- Investigating Ways of Learning
- Widening Classroom Horizons
- Providing Physical Facilities
- Finding and Using Materials
- Recognizing Family and Community Influences
- Strengthening School-Community Understanding
- Evaluating Pupil Growth, the Learning Environment, and Teaching Techniques
- Fostering Teacher Growth.

Plan of This Book

This, then, is the plan of this book: a series of stories of ways in which teachers have improved the learning environment; a discussion of the important factors that determine the learning environment; and an annotated bibliography. It is the hope of the committee that every teacher or supervisor who picks up this book will see himself in it—in the experiences or problems of the teachers in the stories and in the illustrations in Part II. But more important, the committee hopes that the reader will incorporate into his own thinking and practice the central idea; namely, that the focus of the learning environment is on the learner himself, and that only by assessing his reactions and responding to his needs can the learning environment be improved. It is our hope that this book will help every reader see more clearly his own role in creating a good learning environment.

Teachers in Action Develop a Good Environment for Learning

Part I of this yearbook shows six teachers at work, each creating, in his own way and to the best of his ability, a good environment for learning. These six stories have this common theme, yet they vary markedly in their content and setting. They represent rural, big-city and suburban areas. Some are elementary school stories; others, secondary. A diary form is used in two of the stories; the others are narrative descriptions. In one, the students tell their own story. In some instances, the teachers involved faced seemingly insurmountable obstacles. In others, the conditions were clearly favorable for developing good learning environments. The time element covered in the stories varies from one full day in a primary grade to seven years in a rural upper-grade school. Each story necessarily discusses only one aspect of the total learning environment and the efforts made to improve it; each has a different point of emphasis. Together, however, the stories give accounts of approaches made to the solution of many of the types of problems which confront a teacher in today's schools.

Why were these stories used in the yearbook? They were included for two reasons: (a) to illustrate real school situations and (b) to reveal problems which teachers face and to show how they and their pupils approach a solution of these problems.

Because the stories are based on real experiences rather than upon hypothetical ideal situations, some of the practices may seem to the reader to be not entirely sound. In order to give perspective and to accentuate sound principles of learning, the editors have inserted marginal comments. These generalizations reflect conclusions and raise questions relating to the stories.

We hope that you will be able to identify yourself with some of the teachers in these stories. We also hope that their efforts will be an inspiration to guide you in your own endeavors to create a better environment for learning.



INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER I

This account consists of excerpts from the diary of a first-grade teacher covering a period from September to March. The portions selected describe activities particularly designed to focus on the emotional growth of children. They emphasize the results of one teacher's resolve to become more sensitive to the feelings of children. They also illustrate her use of many skills and techniques in encouraging children to express their feelings, in helping them gain insight into their own behavior, and in developing learning situations in which they can consciously become better adjusted persons through improved understanding of themselves as individuals and as group members.

Diary of a First-Grade Teacher

MRS. MARTIN teaches first-grade children. She believes strongly that learning to understand one's own feelings and developing good relations with others are important goals in the early school years. This chapter reports some of her efforts during a single school year to develop a classroom program that would carry out these concepts. It is not a diary in the usual sense. It is a personal record of thoughts and feelings, of mental notes made while working with children, of plans they developed together, of difficulties they encountered, of successes they attained. All the material was drawn either from notes made by Mrs. Martin or from records of conversations and planning conferences between Mrs. Martin and the consultants who worked with her.

The experiences reported here belong in a book dealing with the learning environment, for it is well established that emotions and learning are closely related. Feelings brought to the classroom, as well as feelings engendered there, affect learning. Before their first day at school, boys and girls have already learned much about the importance of feelings and of their expression. They know, for example, that some expressions of feeling bring strong reactions on the part of teachers and other adults or on the part of other children. In situations where expressions of feeling are not allowed, even young children may already have learned to hide what they feel and may expect others to do the same. Where such expression is consciously encouraged, children can be helped toward socially desirable ways of handling their own feelings.

Mrs. Martin's school system was participating in a project directed toward classroom application of research in human relations. In this program consultants were available to help individual teachers or groups wishing to participate in the project.

Mrs. Martin wanted to plan a group program which would have value for all her first graders. An experienced teacher, she was convinced that every person in the classroom, child as well

as adult, affects all other persons in the group. She believed that the exploration of one's own feelings is in itself an important part of the learning process. She also believed that such understanding might help some children in their reading and in other basic skills. Knowing each child better would, she believed, make her more successful in interpreting his behavior, in directing efforts toward helping him, in releasing energies and interests for the tasks of learning in the primary grades.

Not every teacher will wish to carry on activities like those reported by Mrs. Martin. In addition to knowledge of how children learn and grow, knowledge of subject matter and of basic skills of instruction, each teacher brings into the classroom his own special gifts, interests, objectives and hopes. Each will, in the final analysis, accomplish best results in his own particular way. In this account, Mrs. Martin's special attitudes and interests, as well as her own professional preparation, influenced the success of the project. Other teachers with different personal competencies and goals will emphasize different experiences as they work with boys and girls. All of us, however, can find new insights as we read what this account reveals about how one teacher and her first-grade group lived and learned and developed together in one classroom during a single year.

The Diary

September 15th

Each year of
teaching is a
new adventure.

First day of school again! After sixteen years of teaching why do I still feel shaky on the first day? Why do I have this "what will I do with this roomful of kids" feeling? I always expected that by now I'd be feeling perfectly at ease and entirely competent. With thirty-five children and their mothers looking me over today, I hope that I at least appear to be capable. Oh, well, in a day or two everything will be under way, going along as if I hadn't "rested" all summer.

I wonder what this class will be like? What will I learn this year? I've already decided to incorporate in the program some of the things I've done and to discard others. I hope to attempt some things I've never done before. Perhaps I can go further this time by building on the experiences of the past few years. I can continue to try new ideas with this group, if I am

also willing to bend over backwards to be sure nothing already proved valuable is sacrificed in the process.

Talk about "individual differences"! In this group some are tiny, some tall, short, fat, skinny. Some look scared; some, curious; a few, dull. There's one roaming like a wild mustang all over the room—he's going to pep things up from the start—wonder what's back of his restlessness? How can I make this classroom a setting in which each child can reach his maximum of achievement and growth?

This year I hope to explore and check some of the effects which each of us has on all the rest. We're going to be together for five days a week for the next ten months—thirty-six different personalities (counting me!) interacting with one another. Every one of us has strong feelings about certain things, and we all have different ways of expressing these feelings. What can be done to make sure that our experiences will result in behavior which we call "desirable"?

I am convinced that children need to be physically and emotionally free to express thoughts and feelings. Yet neither the teacher nor any other one person can hope to meet all needs of every child—for ideas, for support, for information, for emotional satisfactions. I know that parents and other adults meet many of these needs. I believe, too, that children, given a chance, can and do help meet one another's needs. One of my big jobs will be to help them develop the skills and abilities to help one another.

I need to know many things about these boys and girls before we can plan together wisely. Some things I recognize as beyond my control; yet I can find out about these, learn how they are affecting the children and make allowances for them. There are many things I know about first graders in general, but specific things about this particular group of first graders I'll have to learn as we go along together.

I feel good about having already done some planning with Mary and Louise, who will be my consultants this year. We know our plans are tentative, but feel that we have now worked out a set of basic ideas with which to begin. It's wonderful to be employed in a district which allows a teacher to carry on professional activities based upon his own interests,

Thirty-six different personalities will be interacting.

Specifics about particular children must be learned.

where the administration lets us know that respect for individual differences also applies to how teachers work.

October 5th

I can wonder now why I ever felt jittery—knowing it will be the same next year, and the next, and so on and on. Now that we are in motion I feel excited because we have put some plans into action and can feel some things at least are on the way to happening.

A variety of activities may help to put children at ease.

Several problem situations have developed in our room. By experimenting we have learned various ways of going about solving these problems. We have tried role playing, for example, and believe this may help. First we attempted pantomimes; then, acting out stories; then, finally, role playing helped us get at good solutions to the problems we faced. In the pantomime sessions we formed a circle including everyone. We then acted out many different things—complicated, simple or in-between. Everyone had a chance to guess at what was being played. I did the first one, so they would all understand and accept pantomime as a new way to get at problems. All I did was peel potatoes—of course, a dozen or two of them guessed it right away. Then, they took over. They acted out the coloring of pictures and the reading of books; two strong fellows did a tree cutting act for us. There were a half dozen or more who did not volunteer to do anything. But I noticed that tense little Jan seemed to relax a bit and, before the period was over, he, too, was guessing. We'll do this a couple of times a week until everybody feels free to participate. For the ones who still find it too hard, I can encourage teams, putting shy children with friends who are more gregarious.

Though it is early, I have made a sociogram. This is, of course, strictly for my own use. I really wanted to learn more about which personal relationships mean most to these children—in choosing seatmates, playmates or workmates. When asked in the interviews why they chose as they did, the children gave such reasons as these:

We were in the same kindergarten class.

I know him (or her).

We play together.

I have selected for special comment in this record three children who represent a range of feeling expressions and a range of skills for getting along well in the school group. Brenda was selected by many of the children at the time the sociogram was constructed. It is interesting that Brenda chose Sonnie first and then chose two girls "because they help me catch Sonnie." He must be awfully important to her.

A sociogram gives the teacher some clues.

Tom, also, was selected by many children. He appears to be so serenely secure in his relationships. The others say, "He's nice," or "He plays nice." I would be tempted to say, "He's at peace with himself."

Royce was selected by very few children and was rejected by one boy. He seems very anxious about a number of things. He chose Larry "'cause he showed me where he lives and has some baby puppies,"—Deann "'cause she gets insects from her brother. We keep 'em and then they start to die and we throw 'em away."

October 21st

We're on our way! Now we are making a beginning in the basic skills. After all these years, I still enjoy teaching reading, writing, arithmetic and social studies. How rewarding it is to see youngsters in process of learning these things. But we want



more than these basic skills. We want, particularly, an atmosphere in which children can talk about the things that are important to them at the time that they *are* important to them.

The teacher examines her own feelings and hostilities.

Today we talked about "getting mad." We admitted that all of us do become angry at some time or other. So, we made it legitimate to talk about it. And how we talked! As the children expressed themselves so freely, I began to wonder what I would say in a group (let's say a faculty meeting) if somebody asked me what made me angry. Would the way I felt when I left home this morning affect the way I'd answer today? Or, if I didn't have the honesty to answer, would it change what I'd feel like saying? Take a morning when all is sweetness and light and the family members go their separate ways in blissful harmony—what would I say that day? Then take the morning the toast burns, or I have an argument with my husband, or I have to leave my child sick in bed—would my answer be different? Do I think of reasons like these when the teacher next door seems a little uncooperative? Maybe she had such a crisis before *she* left home! Do we teachers recognize that even principals may be affected some days by situations about which we know nothing—or do we expect them to be paragons of consistent behavior?

How can the teacher give Royce the affection he craves?

Royce seems so insecure and demands so many demonstrations of affection. So often through the day he comes to be near me—touches me—hangs on to me—practically "clutching" at me. One recess I was standing outside and he brought my sweater, saying, "Put this on. You might catch cold." Another time I mentioned that I was getting a headache. He stayed after school to tell me, "You go home and take an aspirin and lie down. You'll feel better then." Royce seems to be in need of almost constant affection and attention. He is extremely anxious about the physical well-being of those he loves, and is very quick to cry. One day his mother came to visit us. She seems to be unable to cope with three active boys—one is older and one younger than Royce. She wants help with Royce, and has asked for it. I hope several of us can combine our facilities and our skills in helping her give Royce the kind of program he needs.

When we talked about what other people expect of us, Tom

volunteered just this much, "My mother and daddy want me to be nice to people—don't hit 'em and don't ever get mad at 'em." Tom, in his behavior, is probably the most consistent, the most poised, the most "secure" child in the room. He attacks his work with interest and vigor. Usually he gets everything about right but doesn't seem unduly concerned if he makes a mistake. His leadership in the group is more firmly established every day. He seems to be extremely fair in his dealings with the children and accepts very matter-of-factly that they are nearly all vying for his attention.

Brenda told us, "My daddy—he's the one who takes care of me. He leaves before Auntie gets home. I'm supposed to get somebody to watch me. There's two ladies who will watch me—one's across the street. My daddy thinks I'm supposed to do things right whether I know them or not—school things. When I make a mistake, I have to do it over and do it right. My sister marked on the wall, and my mommie thought it was me and she put both boxes of crayons up high." Brenda is a beautiful child who does fine work. There are times, however, when she becomes very erratic in her performance. I can see some reasons for this!

November 1st

Trying to study my children while teaching them has forced me to make choices—and get some practice in how to make them! Before school began I faced the fact that if I were going to do the things I wanted this year, I would have to bypass some other things. If I *really* intended to do the job I wanted to do, I would have to make time to carry it out as well as possible. I realized that this meant time to meet with consultants in order to plan and evaluate; it meant time to keep records and to study and diagnose those records; it meant taking time to talk with my principal to be sure we were in agreement. His approval and support are necessary for success. I knew it meant that I would have to spend extra time reading the things that might be of help in this project. I had to allow time for unexpected and unforeseen things that would inevitably occur. And it meant allowing more time than ever before for meeting and talking with parents.

How does a teacher use this information?

The teacher has to make choices when budgeting his time.



In preparation for this program, I talked the matter over with my own family. We agreed that at home I might short-cut on the time I spent in cleaning. We would be willing to let the dust stay under the beds a few extra days—and not feel guilty about it if unexpected guests dropped in! We would be willing to use more packaged, canned and frozen foods and to sleep on unironed pillow cases.

Professionally, I have had to sacrifice some things, too, in order to benefit from others. I decided I could work with a co-leader and take on the joint leadership of a study group, a responsibility which I enjoy and which would sustain and support my interest in my own project. There is no choice about attendance at faculty meetings. But the day I refused to serve on a committee in our professional organization was pretty rough. I felt guilty. I'm sure other teachers, too, had some strong feelings about it—but—I have to take a stand according to the way I see my individual limitations and this responsibility was simply "beyond my capacity."

Back to my children! I feel we have already met some success in solving problems through role playing. When we had "pantomimed" until everybody felt at home in the group, we

began doing some simple role playing, using our own background problems such as how we handled the boy or girl who wouldn't give up the swing when a turn was ended, and so on. We even dealt with the problem of how to welcome a new child in the room and how to make him feel at home. Later, when a new child came we were rewarded; he must have felt really welcome. We also role-played endings to the problem story "Play Ball," and there were solutions and generalizations. It is good to see children gaining insights into their own behavior and that of others.

Role playing
may be used
to help
children learn
problem
solving.

November 20th

Was this one of those days! Important visitors were in the room and it was hectic! There were too many visitors at once, of course. Some of them knew it—but which ones? And were they the right ones? Just when we wanted everything to go beautifully, the whole hour was chaotic! I know I was tense and keyed up, and how that must have affected my children! They must have felt as if they were being taught by a stranger! I think I would have collapsed after it was over if it hadn't been for Mary, my consultant. Luckily she stayed after school



When a day
goes badly
a teacher needs
understanding
and support.

and took me out for coffee. After three cups of strong brew and a half hour of "nurture and support," I began to feel almost like a human being again! She and Louise have always been there with the things I need most—support for my own ideas, help in research, and in analysis of our plans and objectives. Not once has one of them suggested that I use someone else's style, or given me a "bag of tricks," or given me her own aims. Although from time to time they must see other possibilities in developing the program of my classroom, they usually postpone mentioning these, so that we can all focus on what I am attempting to do—and at the rate at which I can do it. They have let me "unload" my personal problems, worries and anxieties on them and have often given me the encouraging pat on the back I needed to have in order to pick myself up and start over! This kind of permissive and sustaining relationship—in some form or other—is what I'd like to foster within my own classroom and what I'd like to see permeating my profession!

Christmas Vacation

Teachers must
decide where
children need
special help.

During Christmas vacation the teachers met to take stock of what we now have and to make plans for "Where do we go from here?" We all recognized that at this point we had a great number of possible areas for further study and that we could not possibly do a good job with all of them. Here, again, we had to make a decision about a course to follow for the next few months. After studying all our material, we agreed that one of the major concepts we needed to develop was that of "sharing." So, after vacation I shall begin to focus on this subject. Using Christmas presents as a springboard, we will begin discussions about presents, sharing, how it feels to have something to share, etc. Our long-range goals will be to develop concepts based upon such questions as these:

- Why do people share?
- What kinds of sharing are there?
- Is it hard or easy for people to share?
- How do you recognize sharing when it is going on?
- Are some times better for sharing than are others?

As the teacher, I need to watch for the children who seldom

get the ball, the puzzle, the jump rope. I have to ask myself, how about the things children do when they finish their work? Do the same children get to do these things many times and others very seldom? What can I do to build participation skills for all the children as we focus on the "sharing" of leadership?

January 8th

Here we go again! It peps up the new year to have something new to get at. We started with a discussion of sharing with the emphasis on the question, "Can you think of any times when it is hard to share?" They could! The following are examples of the pupils' comments:

A provocative question invites contributions to a discussion.

TOM: A boy I don't like to share with is a kid who is rough with my toys and throws things up in the air.

BRENDA: Once a girl I know—she's older'n me—she went and got my walking doll—you can brush its hair—and she brushed its hair and I don't like the way she brushed it because it makes all the hair come out just like real hair—but it's not.

ROYCE: I don't share with my brother because he breaks my toys. Once he threw one of my cars down the heater.

LARRY: It's hard to share when you have something you get for Christmas and somebody comes along and plays rough with it awhile. If I had any old toys, I wouldn't let them play with the new toys. I'd give 'em the old ones.

TOM: I have a big truck and I never let my brother play with it because it might get scratched. He doesn't let me play with his fire truck and police car because he likes them real well.

To the question, "Have you had a chance to take the ball out at school?" Royce said, "Some kids, when I'm playing, bounce the ball out of my hands and it bounces in the mud. I would like to play happy with Tom and sometimes with other kids, I wouldn't care who."

And Brenda's response was, "I would like to play with a ball if I took it out and could pick out the kids to play with. When I take a ball out, somebody wants it before I even get a chance to play with it."

Deann put in, "I would play with two kids I picked out if I took the ball out."

January 31st

It pays for the teacher to take a thoughtful look at the children—and at herself.

Stock-taking is certainly a profitable business! With all the things going on in the classroom—and out—each day, I like to stop and take a “long look” once in a while. I found myself doing something today that really needs looking at. Tom is such a leader in our room—he is really the adored one. Every child likes him and looks up to his leadership, and so do I. He’s so dependable and personable—always neat and clean—with big blue eyes and long lashes! So far as I can see, he takes his position with no conceit and remains sweet and amiable. I haven’t seen him take advantage of his popularity. I think, though, that sometimes we use him too much. Today we had an observer for our game at physical education time. We put Tom in the leader role, knowing full well that we could depend on him. We must surely watch, however, that we do not use his qualities at the expense of helping others to develop their latent abilities.

Teamwork among adults helps a child.

While I’m at it, I’ll take a look at Royce, too. Sometimes now several days will pass without his feeling the urge to stay close to me! The other day he even took the role of supporting somebody else! I had had to be “firm” with little Mary Lee. Royce went to her, put his arm about her shoulders, looked at me quite defiantly and announced firmly, “I am her best friend!” And, for the moment, he was! His mother visited us again about two weeks ago when the doctor gave physical examinations in our room. The doctor and I had had a chance to talk together previously about Royce, and the good doctor—bless her heart!—undoubtedly did much to relieve the anxieties of both the mother and the child. His brother’s teacher and I have conferred often, too, and we have been able to do some joint planning. Together we have sowed some seeds which are bearing fruit!

February 5th

We had a problem story today about a boy who brought his favorite toy, a “just like real” steam shovel, to school. His mother had let him bring it on condition that he would be sure to take good care of it. All the children wanted to play with it, but he wanted to “show them” how it worked.

To meet this problem, we had four role playing sessions.

The first one ended with the statement, "I want to play with it or I'll bust it up." In the second, Tom ended with, "He should tell the people *who* can play with it—it's *his* steam shovel!" In the third, Brenda said, "All right. Don't give it to them then, and don't bring it to school and then they won't fight over it." And in the fourth, Sally stated, "He can take it home right now so they can't play with it. They don't know how to work it."

In the discussion that followed, some of the comments were:

TOM: I would have showed them how and then let them work it.

BOBBY: I have so many things in my house that I don't want my brother to have yet. I had something very special, and I didn't want my brother to have it—it was my first.

ROYCE: My brother had a gyroscope, and he wouldn't let me play with it. I had tinker toys and he wanted to play with them, but every time he was afraid I'd break his gyroscope. I wasn't afraid he'd break mine, but I felt bad.

LARRY: A hard time to share is when you have something brand new. It was hard for Fred to share the steam shovel because he was afraid it would get broken.

TOM: You can share if it isn't brand new.

How can the teacher follow through on such leads?

February 19th

Our problem story today dealt with a girl who didn't want to share her friend with anybody else. She would jump rope only if it could be a "twosome." Again there were four role playing sessions and then an evaluation of them. Among their reactions were the following:

JANE: It happened to me and Katie. Bobby wants me to walk home with him, but I like to walk home with Katie.

BRENDA: I've got two girl friends, one in Room 3 and the other in Room 4. Sherry, the girl in Room 4, and I always walk home together and she won't let me walk with my other girl friend.

DEANN: You should all walk home together.

SUSY: Nobody likes my sister and she is in the third grade and no one likes her at all.

DEANN: By walking home and letting your girl friends play with them, you can make more friends.

How might a teacher accept and manage this typical six-year-old behavior without making the children feel guilty?

March 21st

We have dealt in many ways with "sharing." Since the con-

cept of the tangibles is the easiest to grasp, I felt we should spend a great deal of time on this as a first step. But now I decided we had reached the point where we were ready to go into the more abstract. We took a trip to a farm not long ago in connection with our farm unit. So today we used this setting in acting out a problem story about best use of the teacher's time. I had written a beginning for the story, and the children were to complete it with their own reactions. The story told about some first-grade children who had gone to a farm and were now making pictures to illustrate the things they had seen. In the story all the children made pictures of cows and pigs and tractors and all kinds of farm things. Then the children in the story began—"Look at my picture, Mrs. Martin!" "Do you like my horse?" "Look at mine. Is this a good cow?" "How do you like my silo?" And so on—but all the boys and girls trying to get the teacher's attention at the same time.

The children who were taking the part of the teacher in the story reacted like this:

TRUDY: Just a minute! Just a minute! You go to your seats. Now I will see the pictures *one at a time!*

BRENDA: (despairingly) Now all of you please take your seats! It's recess time!

KENT: Stop! I can't see them now! I'm trying to *think!*

SONNIE: Each of you go to a corner. Go and be quiet.

After the play was finished, I asked the children to describe how they felt when they were playing the part of the teacher in the story situation. They told us:

TRUDY: I was mad. They were all yelling.

KENT: When all the kids started yelling, I felt real mad, like I could spank them.

SONNIE: When I was the teacher, it made me a little mad.

Then I asked, "Did you ever know a time when anything like this happened?" The children answered:

JACK: It does happen here sometimes.

BRENDA: They could put their hands up!

TRUDY: The children should wait if they haven't had a turn until all the kids have showed their pictures. Then after awhile, they could show theirs.

LARRY: The teacher should see that all children get to talk.

SONNIE: The children should be quiet because they are supposed to talk one at a time. The teacher needs to see to it that everyone can talk.

BRENDA: I think it's half the children and half the teacher.

KENT: It is part of the children's job to see that it is quiet.

BRENDA: The kids should be quiet and the teacher should be quiet while *they* are working so they won't make a mistake.

TOM: It isn't up to you to see that the other kids get to the teacher. If someone else is talking and he looks up, he has to wait; but if the teacher isn't busy he can go up by himself. The children should be quiet and the one who is going to talk should be quiet and let one talk at a time. They should wait their turn.

TRUDY: The children should wait and if they want to talk they should raise their hands because *the teacher can't do it all!*

So even first-grade children do begin to share and to appreciate what is involved in situations from other people's viewpoints. The result obtained through this story situation was one of the most interesting I have ever seen, and was in itself a rich reward for all our work up to the present. It certainly soothes—or maybe entirely heals—the scars from the times when I may have felt the failures so deeply!

March 28th

How often I have resolved to have a permissive atmosphere in the classroom—permissive in that what anybody feels, he is free to say (within understood limitations). But sooner or later the test comes—do I really mean it, or is it just something I'm saying? Can I enjoy permissiveness—or permit it—just as long as all the feelings are directed toward somebody else? But will my attitude change when I am the target?

During recess today I was on yard duty. It was necessary for me to have Brenda and two of her friends "sit out" the last half of recess on a bench. When we came back to the room, I had really forgotten the incident. But Brenda's pretty face was dark as a thundercloud. Innocently enough, I asked her what was troubling her. The explosion that followed was rather sensational. "I'm mad at you!" she cried shrilly. "You're mean to me!" I felt pretty strange. My first reaction was that of anger. I felt ready to "talk right back" with a kind of "Well,

When a teacher faces her own feelings she can be more objective about a child's outbursts.

now isn't that just too bad!" sort of retort. But I thought better of it. I decided to see what we could really do with a situation like this. So I commented, "I see. That does happen, doesn't it? We all get mad at people sometimes—even at people we like. Would you like to tell all of us just how you feel about it?"

And then it came, like a torrent—"You made me sit on the bench—and my auntie's been mean to me—and my mommie hasn't come to see me for a long, long time—and—and—my daddy's gonna get married, and my sister and I don't want him to!" Then the tears came and she was crying on my shoulder—sobbing her heart out, while the other children looked on with sympathy. Well—after a little while we could all talk about it. Some of the children thought it was fair that Brenda had had to sit on the bench. Others said it would have been a good thing if I had known she was worried and could have been "a little nicer to her." They then decided we ought to do "just what Brenda wanted to do" for the remainder of the hour. So we did—we read her favorite stories for the rest of the period and were rewarded by finally seeing her smiling and happy again.

Who can say what our interest did or did not do for Brenda? Who can tell what it means to have thirty-five people wanting to spend an hour helping one person "feel better"? Who can judge what it meant to a six-year-old to be able to say to her teacher, "I'm mad at you!"? And who can measure what those thirty-five individuals learned from having taken the time and trouble to comfort one child and from seeing her happiness follow? All the children in a group *do* learn from the things that happen to any of them. Giving this kind of help to one child is not neglecting the others so long as help is given in ways which add to the insights of all.

Spring vacation is coming now. Louise and Mary and I will spend part of it again reviewing, evaluating, weighing, planning. Which direction will we decide to take? What satisfactions may we take from the records of results we have attained thus far or from the changes we can measure? Whatever the future may hold, we are eager for it!

The teacher
must understand
Brenda's need
to gain her
respect.

Conclusion

The reader will wonder about outcomes. There were many signs of growth. Some of these have already been described for Brenda and Royce. All children made gains in learning to work with others, in ability to use the school situation for productive activity, and in skills. A visitor to this classroom at the end of the year commented upon the effectiveness of the oral expression of the children, the ability of most of the group to work long and efficiently on the solution of problems of all sorts, on their readiness to consider one another's difficulties and make room for them, on the increased insight shown in the array of reasons they suggested for behaviors in problem stories, and on the range of solutions they seemed able to attempt. Other visitors commented on the ease with which these children met grownups and the competence with which they described their activities to adult visitors.

A discussion of outcomes should consider what happened to the teacher. Any district which invests time and money in an in-service education program hopes the investment will yield dividends of greater professional competence among the teachers who participate. Mrs. Martin became aware of some limitations of her classroom practices and began to see new areas of study and activity on which she wished to concentrate. She became more skillful with certain techniques and saw new applications for these. For example, later, when she was working on a new assignment with retarded children, many of whom were in difficulties because of impetuosity and over-activity, Mrs. Martin made effective use of role playing to help these children learn to conduct themselves properly in the classrooms, in the corridors and on the playground.

Mrs. Martin became still more interested in classroom studies of pupils. Certainly this kind of teacher interest is an attribute to be encouraged in any district. She also learned ways of interpreting to others what she had tried and what she had learned.



INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER II

This story describes in some detail the events of a single day. It emphasizes the importance of routine happenings in the development of boys and girls. The story demonstrates the fact that a good learning environment does not "just happen." Rather, it is the result of careful planning—including pupil participation, attention to detail, dedication to teaching and to the development of children. It is on this note, in fact, that the story ends. "Miss Jensen got out her chart materials, for the children would certainly be disappointed if the story they had written was not ready by tomorrow."

A Day in a Primary Grade

THIS is the story of an average day in a third grade. It is written as though the observer could not only follow the children's and teacher's activities as they happen but could also look into the teacher's thoughts. The reader is invited to share Miss Jensen's knowledge about her pupils, her recollections and her decisions. It is not an exciting or dramatic or glamorous story. Day-by-day events only rarely have moments of heroism, tragedy or sustained suspense. This story is simply an account of teacher and children working together; it is an account of their small pleasures, their fleeting disappointments, their conflicts and solutions—these, indeed, are the elements which make up human lives. The accumulated weight of countless incidents imperceptibly shapes each child's personality, marking it with courage or fearfulness, friendliness or hostility, cynicism or idealism.

According to rumor, one research center was never able to complete a projected study of children. Research workers or graduate students could not be found to study persistently the sometimes tedious details of children's lives. Tolerance for repetition and monotony is a taxing requirement in working with children. The true educator, whether parent or teacher, shares in each child's excitement and sense of discovery at learning. Although long familiar and endlessly repeated for the teacher, each experience of meaning must be felt by the learner to be entirely fresh and new.

Miss Jensen has taught a little more than fifteen years in her present school. Like many teachers, she has continued her professional education in university classes and through the in-service activities of her school and community. Her values and personal characteristics, as well as her training, have taught her to stress the development of responsibility in boys and girls and of a respect for order and routine. She tempers her expectations for individual pupils, however, and tries to balance other pressures in children's lives. She recognizes and therefore is able to control the adult's customary impatience at the ups and downs of children's learning. Through the years Miss Jensen has mastered many profes-

sional techniques of working with children. She is adept at helping children move smoothly from one activity to another and at forestalling or arbitrating disputes. Many details of selecting materials, adapting activities, and varying her teaching methods for individual children—once laborious and time-consuming procedures—she has now completely mastered. Miss Jensen has also arrived at satisfactory answers to several questions which once perplexed her. She is not overly anxious about some criticisms, for she feels confidence in her own and in her pupils' purposes. While encouraging the children to participate in decisions, she has in no sense abdicated her duty as the responsible adult leader. In general, Miss Jensen experiences many satisfactions in teaching, because she recognizes her competencies and feels adequate to face the demands of her profession.

Teachers face several professional hazards, however, as they attain these skills in planning and carrying out activities. The daily life of the classroom may become monotonous and unchallenging. Unless the teacher attempts to explore deeper meanings in human personality and to try out more subtle techniques, her teaching may become mechanical and tedious. Miss Jensen's fundamental liking for children and the insights accompanying her own maturity are helping her past this plateau of competency. Because of her understanding and sympathy for individual children, she constantly questions her own procedures. She responds to Denny's need for affection, although she is not ready to go as deeply into the examination of feelings as the teacher described in the first chapter. Sensitivity to Connie's lack of group skills and to Alicia's perfectionism and timidity leads Miss Jensen to re-evaluate her plans and to devise new experiences for them. Relating her observations of life to the children's schooling, Miss Jensen raises several thoughtful questions. How should the demands of our time-oriented culture be adapted to children's differing tempos? How can children be helped to balance their need for support and their urge for independence? How can the teacher give enough help to insure the success of children and yet encourage them in self-reliance?

In addition to these specific questions Miss Jensen considers the persistent problems of all teachers: "How did it go today?" and "What should be planned for tomorrow?"

There are several questions of interest to supervisors which

may not have occurred to Miss Jensen. Her pupils' interest in trucks is stimulating a variety of such activities as construction, instructional trips, painting, reading, discussing and writing. In these activities children with different kinds and degrees of abilities contribute to one another and win group recognition. Because of this flexibility of interest there is wide participation in planning and in making decisions. The children's absorption in these activities, however, may cause both teacher and children to lose sight of their broader purposes. The making of trucks may become an end in itself rather than a means of understanding the work and needs of people in the community. How can the teacher and the children be helped to relate their learnings to broader understandings of human relations and values?

Several of Miss Jensen's decisions may seem inconsistent because they reflect cultural problems which are as yet unresolved. The school as an institution has been given a major responsibility for fitting the child to his society. It must also produce citizens capable of improving and modifying that society. Unless the teacher sees this problem in its broadest context, he is troubled by a sense of inconsistency as he sometimes teaches the child to adjust to school life and at other times adapts his demands to the nature of the individual.

In villages, towns and cities throughout the country there are many teachers like Miss Jensen. They are sometimes ignored or undervalued by the community and often they are forgotten by the children to whom they have given so much of their thought and energy. While planning group activities that will add daily increments to accomplishment and growth, teachers try to meet each child's need for affection and recognition. They share in each family's hopes and anxieties and at the same time are sensitive to the community's expectations of public education. Teachers gain deep satisfactions as they contribute to the immediate happiness and well-being of the children in their care. They do not always recognize that their day-by-day efforts are of great importance to society and significantly influence the future.

The Story

Sunlight streamed through the large patio windows of the third-grade room. Miss Jensen laid her folder of notes and plans on the desk and adjusted the blinds. On the front board

she placed a large chart in which had been inserted the names of children who had been given responsibilities for the week.

All children
have chances
at important
jobs.

Our Jobs This Week

Chairman	Connie		
Secretary	Alicia		
Treasurer	Bobby		
Clean-up	Denny	Sue	Mary
Nutrition	Ken	Peggy	
Games	Steven	Kathy	
Extra Jobs			

Miss Jensen stood looking at the chart and wondered how the week would go. The officers and monitors had been chosen by the class from among those who had not yet served in order that every one might have a turn. This plan of election ensured to all pupils a chance at each job and enabled about a third of the group to serve each week. Special monitors were also appointed from time to time when extra jobs arose or when a child seemed to need attention and responsibility. Often the jobs were not perfectly done, but just as often a child's abilities surprised even his classmates.

Connie would be an efficient president. She was among the last to be chosen for this place, however, because she was "too bossy." As the oldest child at home she was often given responsibilities and authority. Connie was capable, but the others resented her directions. Would the class see and appreciate her ability? Or would she make them dislike her more by the way she carried out her responsibilities? Connie needed response from the other children, but the harder she tried the more mistakes she seemed to make. She acted more like a foreman than a friend to the others.

And then there was Alicia, so shy and timid that she entered into very few of the class activities. Several long illnesses had deprived her of normal play activities, and her attendance at school had been irregular. Alicia's parents understandably were anxious about her, although they were trying to increase her self-confidence. Alicia had not wanted to be secretary, but the others had insisted. Although she would undoubtedly be nervous, several of her classmates could be counted upon to help her.

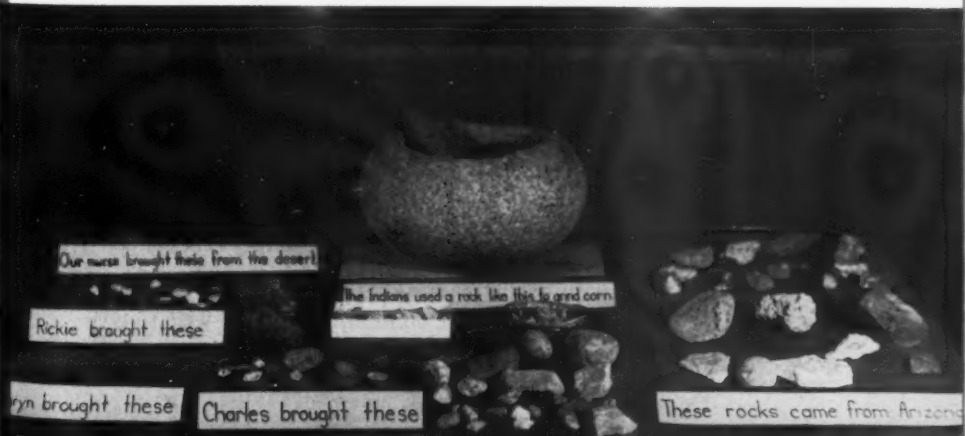
Dreamy, irresponsible Denny would have to be reminded constantly of his responsibilities. He seemed to need affection rather than recognition; at least, he had not yet grasped the idea of *earning* approval. His young parents had expected perfection of their first son. Denny seemed to be discouraged and to evade any activity in which he would be judged or evaluated.

Steven was a good choice for game leader because he was so capable and so much interested in games. He was often rough in play, however, and intolerant of the other children's mistakes. They all admired his skill and often followed his example. Steven was uninterested in academic work and received little help on this at home. He showed unusual ability, however, in practical situations which called for problem-solving. Steven might become a constructive leader if he received enough satisfaction in school activities.

By 8:45 several of the pupils had arrived in the room and had put away their lunches and wraps. Two girls who had brought flowers were arranging them in small glass jars. Some rather bunchy bouquets were already on the tables. Several boys by the table were handling the new rocks labeled "These rocks came from Arizona."

The children seemed to feel comfortable and to consider the classroom as *their* room. Changing the table displays and signs occasionally seemed to stimulate and reinforce their interests. Miss Jensen recalled the surprise she had felt when

The teacher of eight-year-olds must be aware of the problems each child has in identifying with peers.



Changing the
environment
stimulates
interests.

her first supervisor had made suggestions about room arrangement. Would she have thought of changing the children's tables, of bringing in new pictures and displays by herself? At the time, arranging collections, setting up a picture file or writing signs and notices had seemed to be just time-consuming extra work. Now the pupils' interest and willingness to help more than repaid the few minutes it took to plan something new as an occasional surprise. Always she and the children were finding something—a rock, a plant or a picture—that the others would enjoy.

A New Day Begins

When the bell rang, the class gathered at the front of the room in a sharing circle. With obvious enjoyment and in a loud, clear voice, Connie led the flag salute. Placing the card with the drawing of the sun on the calendar chart, Alicia said, "Today is Tuesday, November 18th." Connie then asked, "Who is absent today?" Alicia replied that Carmen was still sick. Then Alicia wrote on the attendance chart:

There are 14 boys and 15 girls here today. *Carmen* is absent. As treasurer, Bobby went to the office to report that one less order of milk would be needed.

Some routine
classroom
activities
provide
valuable
learning
experiences
for children.

She could do these chores herself more quickly, Miss Jensen thought, but many valuable opportunities for children's learning would be lost. Props such as the calendar and attendance charts were a help to children in following their routines.

Denny signaled for attention and then announced that his mother had come home yesterday with his new baby sister. The children were greatly interested and asked questions about her name, the color of her eyes, and her eating habits. Several children volunteered information about their own baby brothers and sisters. This information was climaxed by Tony's remark, "They are good until they start walking and then they're just into everything something terrible. Then you better keep your stuff locked up."

Relations with younger brothers and sisters appeared to be difficult for many of these children. It seemed wise to give

them time early in the day to exchange experiences and to express and accept their mixed feelings about other family members. Surely, however, this time was well spent, thought Miss Jensen, for the children could not freely seek new information about the community while they were still preoccupied with more personal problems. They needed help in recognizing that these are universal human problems and that everyone sometimes feels angry and unhappy. To help give them this understanding, Miss Jensen promised to read the children at story time an interesting book about a new baby.

Connie now called on Sue, who had seen a television program about animals. She began to describe the seals and their ways of sunning and swimming. The television, though, didn't show their color. "What color are seals?" asked Mary. In response to this question, Bobby went to the picture file for several mounted colored pictures. These he displayed while Sue was talking.

A sixth-grade boy now entered the room and waited quietly until he could be introduced. He then talked briefly and convincingly about the school's Red Cross drive, while the children looked up at him in awe. How much Clifford had changed in the three years since he had left Miss Jensen's room! It was reassuring, Miss Jensen thought, to see the growth children make in such a short time. One can become so intent upon the characteristics and problems of children at one's own grade level that a sense of perspective is easily lost.

Miss Jensen thanked Clifford for his talk, and as he left several children applauded. Apparently they too enjoyed seeing children from other rooms and relished the variety of an occasional interruption. Variety can be overdone, however, thought Miss Jensen, as she recalled past years when almost every hour brought visitors, messages or bulletins. The faculty planning group was now doing a much better job of controlling the schedule of drives and school activities.

Miss Jensen wondered whether a visitor or her supervisor and principal would consider the children's earlier discussion as "relevant." At one time she had always been a little nervous about how others might judge the value of children's discus-

How can teachers keep from feeling guilty about helping children with their personal problems?

Children learn through contacts with children older than themselves.

Teacher security
is fostered
when goals are
clear.

sion. She had felt apprehensive and uneasy when visitors were present. Now, thought Miss Jensen confidently, I can justify and explain the purposes of such a discussion. Conferences with her principal and supervisors had helped to clarify the supporting reasons for many activities which she had once feared would be criticized by others. The children did have so many intense but fleeting interests created by their own activity, their curiosity and the complexity of the world about them. They were learning many reference skills, however, as they used the picture file and were gaining practice in questioning and discussing as means of solving problems.

Connie formally called on Ken, who said, "You don't have to call on us like that when we're standing. But, anyway, I brought another rock. I think it's crystal. I'm not sure. It's from the desert, but it's a sharp rock." After showing the rock Ken put it on the table for the children to study later. As he passed Connie, he gave her an angry look. Poor Connie! She enjoyed a directing role so much in spite of the children's expressed resentment. Perhaps, Miss Jensen thought, an opportunity can be found later to use role playing with the children and to consider different ways of giving directions. But would she be able to manage it? Teresa Andrews, who taught next door, was always urging her to try these new methods. Miss Jensen jotted in her notebook, "Sometime soon, maybe after noon playtime, suggest that different children show how they act and feel after they are given an abrupt command, a milder reminder, etc., by a safety patrol member. This is to help Connie particularly."

As she works
with children,
the teacher
notes and
plans to meet
individual
needs.

Although the pupils enjoyed talking in the group, their ability to listen was limited, and they often needed help in moving on to a new activity. Because many children were becoming restless, Miss Jensen now asked, "Are we ready to begin our work this morning? Does everyone have a job and know what his work is?" Most of the group assented although Denny had to be reminded that he was still working on his truck.

Miss Jensen then asked, "Do we have all the materials we need? Let's look at the board where we wrote our plans yesterday so that we would not forget them."

On the board had been written:

We need

Boxes

Sandpaper

We want to know

How far is it from our school
to the fire station?

Miss Jensen had brought the sandpaper. She asked the class, "Where should it be kept?" After several suggestions it was decided that the back of the tool kit would be the best place. Maybe, just maybe, thought Miss Jensen, since the children had made the decision, the sandpaper would sometimes be found in its appointed place! The chances were better, however, than in the days when she herself had arranged the materials and had constantly checked on their return.

Denny and Bobby rather shamefacedly admitted that they had forgotten to bring the boxes they had promised. Work on new buildings would have to wait another day. Miss Jensen resisted an impulse to comment upon the boys' forgetfulness. After all, she thought, most children (and many adults) forget to carry some responsibilities they have assumed. It really is unnecessary to add reprimand to their own realization that they have delayed the group's activities.

Steven reported that his father had measured the distance from the fire station to the school by the speedometer in his car and that it was just four and one-half miles. This information was written after the third question on the board.

Planning Use of Time

Looking at the clock, Miss Jensen asked, "How long shall we work this morning?" Connie immediately said, "Until ten o'clock." At once several members of the class objected, pointing out that they needed time for clean-up. Again the classmates had rejected Connie's too quick and definite suggestion. After some discussion Bobby was asked to set the class clock at ten minutes to ten. The pupils were getting practice in telling time as well as in estimating the time needed for their own activities.

Miss Jensen then said, "The people making signs com-

The children
plan the time
and conditions
of their work.



plained yesterday that others bumped into them. What can we do to keep out of one another's way?" Connie suggested, "We could work in the patio." After this group had taken its boards and paints outside, Miss Jensen said, "Now those working on the trucks and buildings may start." Dismissing the children by work groups avoided the general noise and confusion of starting the work period which Miss Jensen had once dreaded. This procedure helped the members of each group to keep their own activities in mind and to feel more unity of purpose.

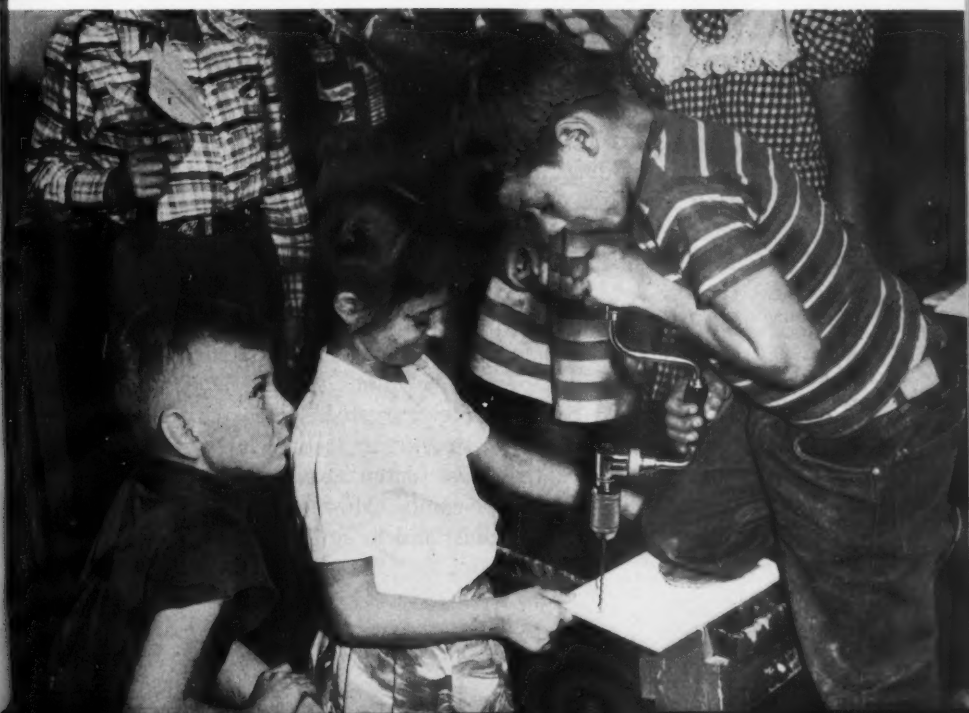
The children were showing growth in their ability to plan and to make and revise their group decisions. When they participated in decisions, they now felt greater responsibility for carrying out their plans. They were learning that everyone is disappointed or inconvenienced when anyone fails to do his part. In addition, they were finding that group planning creates a climate of acceptance. Many children showed signs

of developing feelings of personal worth through the recognition and appreciation of the group.

The teacher joined the group working on the trucks and buildings. Steven was intently working on the gas station. The plan for the posts and gas tanks had been his own idea; he was always dissatisfied with details that weren't "real." Construction activity offered many challenges to Steven's practical ability which might not have been detected in a purely academic program. Without these opportunities to show his abilities, Steven would probably have found few satisfactions in school and his capabilities would not have been recognized. But surely the Stevens are needed and valued in today's world. Schooling must not leave Steven feeling frustrated and discouraged but must be broad enough to recognize and use his competencies.

At the rock table some children were observing the refraction of light through the new rock. While three other boys helped one another measuring and sawing boards, Denny stood idly by. Instead of measuring his board he placed a truck on it to estimate the needed length. As Miss Jensen moved toward him, he turned and asked eagerly, "Will you come

Work time for children is observation time for the teacher.



see my baby sister soon? My mother said you could." It seemed clear that Denny's thoughts were at home and far away from trucks.

Experiences have different meaning and intensity for each child.

No matter how carefully the teacher plans, thought Miss Jensen, the same experience has different meaning and intensity for different pupils. Steven entered into the construction period with enthusiasm. He always pushed forward the group's work with his quick insight into problems. Denny seemed to move in a dream; the problems of measurement and accuracy which were challenging to Steven did not even exist for Denny. This surely was a vivid illustration of the principle that the same outcomes in learning cannot be expected for different children, since each perceives the same situation so differently. Once, thought Miss Jensen, she had been discouraged and felt her teaching a failure when it did not increase children's similarities. She had expected from all children the same answers, the identical understandings and responses to most school experiences. Since she had become sensitive to the many aspects of children's personalities and the variety of their past experiences, she realized that she must expect differences in learning. But there must be readily available a variety of materials and activities so that each child may find something of meaning to him, if he is to grow and to learn.

Clean-Up and Evaluation

In the patio several girls were printing and painting signs for the buildings and roads. As they worked, they discussed their new Brownie uniforms and pointedly ignored Connie's comments. Alicia, however, had barely started her lettering. This seemed a difficult assignment for perfectionist Alicia. Her flushed face and compressed lips revealed the anxiety she felt lest she make a mistake. Miss Jensen had felt at the time that Alicia had made an unhappy choice of activity. To Miss Jensen's surprise, however, her quick suggestion of alternate activities had been definitely rejected. Alicia seemed determined to accomplish this particular task. Why were my suggestions not accepted? Miss Jensen asked herself. Always before, they have been welcomed. How can Alicia be helped to be less of a perfectionist and to enter into activities more

Is it possible that Alicia's rejection of the teacher's suggestion meant a step in growth for the child?

wholeheartedly? What other materials and activities would help her feel freer? How would she respond to clay and finger paints if she were able to work with them at home first?

Connie had been watching the clock and comparing it with the paper clock set for clean-up time. Now she called out, "It's time to clean up." Some boys and girls began; others did not. Two boys continued measuring a board until Connie told them to hurry up. With obvious annoyance, they finally complied. Denny had been flipping through the independent work materials in the corner until Miss Jensen pointed to the chart in order to remind him of his clean-up job. It seemed better to give him some help than to reprimand him or let the other children censure him. Denny quickly went to get the broom and began sweeping.

Miss Jensen had to settle a dispute over the magnet which Steven had brought to pick up nails. She remonstrated with the girls at the sink, who were washing not only their paint brushes but almost everything in sight. Clean-up always seemed to take longer than planned. Should she hurry them more? Or was it better for the children themselves to realize the necessity for more dispatch? There were so many differences in energy and tempo that surely no one could expect them all to start and stop activities simultaneously. Yet there would be times in children's lives now and in the future when this would be necessary.

While a few were still around the room finishing clean-up duties, most of the class had come to sit around the teacher. They now began to discuss who needed help and what their problems were.

TEACHER: Did you get a lot done this morning? Who would like to tell us about the work he did?

STEVEN: We already finished the gas station.

ESTHER: I finished taking the nails out.

TEACHER: We would like to see your gas station. Will the people who worked on it bring it in?

TONY: How do you get inside?

LAWRENCE: It needs a door in the back.

EARL: We could knock it out with a hammer.

STEVEN: We could use the brace and bit and drill a hole.

TEACHER: Will you show us how you will drill a hole?

How does this discussion stimulate further growth?

STEVEN: (drawing on board) You should put the hole right here.

TEACHER: Have we helped you?

TONY: Yes.

TEACHER: Are there any other problems?

EARL: Where are we going to have our roads?

TEACHER: What did we decide?

EARL: Here in the room. Those little lines will tell us how to go straight and then we can measure how wide to make the roads.

ESTHER: We need to move chairs and tables.

EARL: What about the roads? We can't get the paint off. It will ruin the floors.

ANGELITA: Calcimine is easy to take off. It's water paint.

TEACHER: We have been doing a lot of talking and reading about trucks. How are they going to be used?

CYNTHIA: For our community. We need them to take things from the stores to the homes.

TEACHER: How many kinds of trucks do we have? Would you like to write a story about them?

EARL: Call it "Helpers in Our Community."

BEVERLY: Yes. The trucks help us; they bring things.

CYNTHIA: I have a sentence: "We are building trucks for our community."

Miss Jensen wrote the sentence on the board as Cynthia dictated, and the class then read it together.

VINCENT: We like to play in our community.

FRED H.: Many different kinds of trucks are helpers in our community.

Can group
discussion help
children learn
to read?

Eagerly the children suggested:

BETTY: Moving van

JOSIE: Gas truck

EARL: Those things that carry money

LAURENCE: Bank truck

BEVERLY: Ambulance.

As the kinds of trucks were enumerated, Miss Jensen wrote them on the board. The class read the chart together, and then each boy and girl took a turn at reading.

Our Community Trucks

We are building trucks for our community.

We like to play in our community.

Many different kinds of trucks are helpers in our community.

Garbage	Water
Bakery	Fire
Moving Van	Ambulance
Gas	Bank
Electric	Police
Telephone	Newspaper
Milk	

Time for Play

At ten o'clock the children were dismissed informally in pairs and in groups for recess. Ken and Peggy stayed to arrange the distribution of milk, paper napkins and crackers at the tables. Here was another opportunity to help the children feel responsible for the activities of the class, although some needed much less practice than others. When they had completed their tasks, the monitors and teachers left for the playground.

On the playground several children used the swings and apparatus; others played hopscotch and jump rope. They seemed to enjoy this recess and no scuffles or disputes were apparent. Was this because recess was a time for free choice and unstructured activities? So much of the children's lives seemed to be ordered by adult plans. The modern tempo of "finish this to start that," "leave here to get there" seemed dominant also in children's out-of-school lives. The luxury of just playing, of "taking the long way home" and of dawdling over some chore or some activity seemed denied many of these children. Should life at school reinforce the following of definite routines or should it provide a slower tempo?

When Miss Jensen signaled, the children entered the room and sat at their tables for their milk and crackers. Miss Jensen was able to overhear much of their informal conversation. Denny was discussing his new sister. Connie and Sue were describing their best dresses, and Steven was excitedly relating a story from "Space Patrol." These opportunities for informal conversation where boys and girls can learn to communicate and listen were helpful in understanding each child and in planning for him. In her notebook, Miss Jensen jotted

Change of pace
is important.



down the subjects of interest to particular children. When the class had finished, Ken and Peggy stacked the milk cartons in trays and collected napkins and crumbs.

Help with Reading

How can
teachers judge
when
their directions
are really
needed?

Miss Jensen announced that those who were reading in Jim's group might go to the patio to prepare for the class their report on highway building. Steven's group was asked to sit with the teacher to work with her. Finding easy material of interesting content for this group of slower readers was one of the most difficult problems of preparation. The old copies of their weekly newspaper which Miss Jensen had saved had proved to be a great success. Although it was easy reading, the pupils were interested in the content of the story about the oil truck which had appeared in one of the issues. Miss Jensen and the group discussed the story and the pictures. After the pupils had used many of the words in the story, they were asked to find the words in context. Miss Jensen helped pronounce any words over which they hesitated, noting these on her pad. She would use these words later on word cards. She now suggested that one or two members of

the group might read the story and report to the class the reason why the chain dragged behind the truck. She hoped to help the children in this reading group earn the status they needed in the class.

Twenty minutes later Miss Jensen joined the group that had been answering questions about a story in the reader. After reviewing these questions with the group, Miss Jensen introduced a new story by asking questions about the characters. As the children took turns reading, Miss Jensen again supplied unfamiliar words, noting them for future review. After a child had read a section containing a new word, Miss Jensen asked him how he had found out the word. This procedure enabled the children to share their methods of independent word recognition.

As Miss Jensen turned back to the first group, she thought of how difficult all of this had once seemed to her. As a beginning teacher, she had once been overwhelmed at the thought of planning several groups and bewildered about suitable books and materials for them. Each step—the introduction of a new story, reviewing just-learned words, helping the children organize for summarizing and reporting—had seemed complex and difficult. I never really thought about anything

How can teachers share with children more responsibility for managing their own learning?



except reading then, recalled Miss Jensen. It's good there was an encouraging supervisor around to help me, or I might have given up.

"Ideal" Playground

At eleven o'clock Miss Jensen sent Sue to call in the group that was working in the patio. As Steven went to get the ball, Miss Jensen asked, "Who is playing our new game, dodgeball, today? Follow Steven, who will remind you of the rules. Those who are in the relay races go with Kathy, and don't forget to pay attention and to touch the next runner." Miss Jensen followed the children to the playground.

Steven already had the dodgeball game well organized and proceeding with enthusiasm. There was some confusion, however, at the relay races, where several children were calling, "Denny, Denny, wake up! It's you." Denny, dreaming again, had made his side lose. Now that the races were over, Miss Jensen sent the children to the apparatus and swings for free play. For a few minutes the bright sunlight shone on the picture of an ideal playground, upon the children calling to one another as they pushed their swings high, and upon the group intent upon dodgeball. This perfect picture lasted only for a few minutes, however, for soon Kathy came running over to complain that Connie would not give up her turn at the swing. The children continually needed to be reminded of agreed-upon rules. It was hard sometimes to be patient and to realize that this was a natural part of learning. Miss Jensen reminded Connie that fifteen swings was a turn when someone else was waiting. Connie reluctantly began to count.

At a wave from Miss Jensen the boys and girls began to leave the playground and go back to the classroom. She encouraged two laggards by putting her hands out for them and by half running to catch up with the others. This technique often worked better than the continuous and impatient reminding she had once directed toward drifters.

Reporting

When the children were settled down, Miss Jensen asked Jim's group to make its report. The class was just beginning to use different ways of obtaining and reporting information.

The teacher
remembers that
learning
takes time.

Ken began by saying, "We found out a lot about highways. When people give up their land, they are paid." Someone asked, "Who decides how much is paid?" and while Ken knew that the cost of the survey was paid by the Highway Commission, he was not sure how the land was paid for. Miss Jensen recorded the information on the chart, and listed the question along with several others which had been raised in previous discussions. The questions had been clearly formulated by the pupils, indicating their genuine interest and participation.

Questions formulated by the children motivate a search for information.

Sue reported that all who work on the roads are paid by the State Highway Commission but that the roads are paid for by taxes on gasoline. Miss Jensen asked how much the tax on a gallon of gasoline was and one class member replied, "Twenty-five cents." Steven immediately questioned this, saying that his father gets five gallons for \$1.25, so this couldn't be, and besides there were different kinds of gasoline. This question, which Miss Jensen had asked to point up a problem which the children might have overlooked, was added to the chart. Steven promised to get the correct information from the man at the service station.

Miss Jensen placed checks after the questions on the chart which the committee had answered, thus reviewing the new information and emphasizing those questions still unanswered. This summarizing step of the learning situation always gave her and the children a feeling of satisfaction that progress had been made.

How can the teacher learn to give the children the benefit and satisfaction of summarizing?

As chairman, Connie asked the class how they had enjoyed the report. Several children said they had found it interesting and that it would help the work period. With relief Miss Jensen decided that the reporting group had apparently been given enough help to make the experience satisfying to both the committee and the listening group. It was always difficult to know when to give help and when to let children go on their own. Just a few weeks ago this group had attempted its first report to the class. The children then had been unable to answer many questions which Miss Jensen had assumed they understood. The rest of the class had been so critical that Miss Jensen had been afraid that this group would be un-

willing to report again. Perhaps the group's choosing one or two representatives to begin the report had helped.

Music Before Lunch

Miss Jensen suggested that the class choose three songs before going to lunch. Bob reported that in his sister's music book he had found the "Hansel and Gretel" song that Susan had told them about. To follow this special interest seemed wise even though it meant using another grade's book. Miss Jensen found the song in a fourth-grade book and sang it to the children. Then she asked whether they would like to learn it. After some time spent in practicing the new song, the group chose its old favorite, "Small Scouts," and agreed to sing only three verses of "The Sleeping Princess," although they apparently never tired of it. Miss Jensen discarded the idea of asking some children to accompany the singing with rhythm instruments. This might be done another day with rhythms and it was near lunch time anyway. I'm still not comfortable with music, thought Miss Jensen, although the children do love to sing and they seem to like music.

When the lunch bell rang, the boys and girls took their lunches from the cupboards and ate in informal groups at the tables. As Miss Jensen joined one of the groups, she decided that the day was going very well. Observing the children's social behavior in many informal situations throughout the day, Miss Jensen tried to evaluate their growth. The class seemed to have grown in group feeling from the first days of school. Most of the pupils seemed to enjoy their room now and to feel secure in following their routines from one activity to the next. Some of the children did not talk easily, yet they all seemed interested in the informal conversation going on at each of the tables. When all had finished, Ken and Peggy helped clear the tables and the other children left for free play.

Because she was not on yard duty this week, Miss Jensen looked for the story she had promised the class. Although she had planned another story for this time, it seemed best to follow through on the children's interest in Denny's new sister. Finally she started down the hall to the teachers' room for some well-earned relaxation. Teresa Andrews had the same

The teacher is constantly on the lookout for signs of growth.

schedule and would probably already be there. She was fun to talk to: so young and enthusiastic and full of new ideas. We've already helped each other a lot, thought Miss Jensen. It's strange that she can't see that it's the position of the reading table which has made her first efforts at forming reading groups so discouraging. She has stimulated my thinking about children's feelings, though, and has given me new interests. I'll ask her how to start role playing to help Connie and Steven.

A Story by the Teacher

At one o'clock, when the pupils re-entered the classroom, Miss Jensen was waiting to read to them. They were delighted with the account of Nancy's efforts to show her new brother all the family pets. Denny for once seemed to be completely interested. He contributed several comments to the discussion of how to care for young children. Did this mean that Denny had by now really accepted his younger sister? Was he trying to cover up or to manage his real feelings? Miss Jensen thought about her own childhood. She too had always expressed anxious interest in her younger brother. It was only during the discussions in last summer's workshop that she had recognized that she had also had other feelings. Jealousy and resentment had been suppressed as unbecoming in a "big sister." Perhaps she could find some way to convey privately to Denny that everyone sometimes feels anger and jealousy as well as love and pride toward brothers and sisters.

Miss Jensen thought that the emphasis should be turned from the problems presented by younger sisters and brothers to some of the enjoyment and fun they provide. She reminded the class that in Mrs. Wilson's room they had read about the funny things that Baby Sally had done. The children now were quick to extend her suggestions. Soon several of them were relating the funny things their own brothers and sisters had done. The teacher then suggested that tomorrow some might like to draw or paint some of the funny things their younger brothers or sisters had done. Mary asked whether the class might make its own book of "Funny Things Babies Do." The others agreed to this suggestion with enthusiasm.

The teacher's analysis of her own childhood emotions improves her understanding of children's problems.

Learning Addition

Work papers of column addition were distributed to the children who had worked with the teacher the day before. The class was apparently becoming accustomed to doing group work and to expecting continuity in its day-to-day work. Miss Jensen explained that the problems were to help them practice by themselves what they had just learned yesterday. Steven's group, which had been interested in measuring distance by miles, was told to use the arithmetic books. In order to get the children started, Miss Jensen read and discussed the first problem with the group.

She then asked six pupils to work with her. These children had been developing addition combinations that make nine. They had been able to find six combinations totaling the sum of nine. The teacher distributed tagboard cards with the several combinations written on them. Since the sums were on the back of each card, the children continued the practice independently like a game. Before two o'clock the class was dismissed for the lavatory and a short recess.

Evaluating a Day's Growth

Can
development of
meaning reduce
time needed
on drill?

When her pupils returned, Miss Jensen instructed them to continue recopying the letters with which she had helped them on the previous day. Eight children were called to work directly with her in learning a list of most-needed words which she had compiled after studying their word boxes. In this way, practice or drill would be consistently related to her diagnosis of each child's specific errors.

Shortly before dismissal time Miss Jensen asked the class to put its things away. Denny, Sue and Mary straightened the book and science tables. They collected the drill papers and put them on the teacher's desk. When Miss Jensen asked, "Did we have a good day?" many of the children enthusiastically expressed agreement. Among the comments were:

We learned a lot about highways.
We are going to find out about the gasoline tax.
We know how many combinations make nine.
We practiced our words.
Some of us are ready to mail our letters.
We've got to plan and measure for our roads.

The children needed help in becoming aware of their own learnings. Reviewing new information and problems seemed to stimulate and motivate learning for the next day. It also gave the children something definite with which to respond in answer to their parents' interested question: "What did you do at school today?" Miss Jensen thanked the children for their reminders. She then dismissed the boys and girls to get their wraps, calling up different groups by the color of their socks and ribbons.

When all her third graders had left with a last goodbye, Miss Jensen sighed and stretched. It had been a full day but a good one. She had felt that Denny had really participated with the group today, although *there* were his sweater and lunch box—forgotten again! Perhaps she should plan to see his mother soon so that together they could give Denny more recognition. Steven and Connie had worked well; most children did respond to responsibilities in spite of adult fears. Perhaps she could use an incident from the playground tomorrow to help her pupils play out different solutions to conflicts. Both Steven and Connie seemed ready now to change some of their techniques of reacting to others. Alicia had shown more self-confidence. By the end of the week she would have had several satisfying experiences in serving the group.

What should be planned for tomorrow? Some of the class might follow the suggestion about painting pictures depicting their younger brothers and sisters. Many seemed to need help in expressing and accepting their feelings about them. The easy reading from the weekly newspaper had been just right for the slow reading group. If only there were more stories that were easy and yet full of interest! Miss Jensen began to plan for tomorrow—although, she thought, tomorrow never happens just the way it's planned. In training, her supervising teacher had always said, "Expect the unexpected and be not dismayed." Should the class move toward planning a trip to the post office as she had originally thought? Or should she follow up on their present interest in trucks? Miss Jensen got out her chart materials, for the children would certainly be disappointed if the story they had written was not ready by tomorrow.

How can a teacher prevent end-of-day evaluation from becoming a meaningless routine?

Evaluating and planning are carried on simultaneously.



INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER III

Any teacher facing unusually difficult conditions should find encouragement in this story. It graphically describes the improvement which can take place over a comparatively brief period of time when a conscientious, understanding teacher is diligent in his efforts. The account reveals the ability of boys and girls to assume responsibilities when given an opportunity to do so. It also demonstrates the effectiveness of parent participation when school and community living are closely related. The teacher in this account appears to have had a clear and sound philosophy which gave guidance to her efforts throughout the seven-year period. This consistency of leadership, plus a simple, direct approach to problems, accounts in large measure for the successful efforts of this school in creating a good environment for learning.

Seven Years in a Rural Upper-Grade School

REMARKS of teachers often reveal that they feel that school improvement depends upon equipment, space and the help of special teachers. Such a feeling became a challenge to the teachers in the school which is the subject of this story.

The following pages describe the progress that Mrs. Brown made in a two-room school in a rural community over a period of seven years.

On a dreary winter day several people from the state university visited a two-teacher school in a rural community of one of the Southern states. Upon arrival, the group was greeted by a boy from the upper-grade room who extended a gracious invitation to visit his class. The boy told the group that Mrs. Brown, the principal and teacher of grades five through eight, had gone to take a sick child home, but would soon return. The cordial invitation of the boy and the unusual atmosphere of the school impressed the visitors and aroused their interest in seeing the room during the teacher's absence.

Inside the classroom were thirty-five boys and girls. Groups were working on a variety of jobs. These groups included children of various age and grade levels. The visitors noted the orderly activity and purposeful work under way and also the amount of responsibility assumed by children. It was not a period for study confined to reading and writing; rather, the work included various groups discussing and planning, preparing a news bulletin board, making a display of products of the mineral resources in their area, using reference materials and making a map of the local county.

The learning environment evident in the upper-grade room was impressive. As the visitors talked with the children, it became apparent that Mrs. Brown's trip was important and understood by the group. Also, it seemed unusual that thirty-five children including pre-adolescents and adolescents in grades five through eight would, and could, engage in unsupervised group activity. Perhaps even more impressive to

the observers was the purposeful manner in which the groups were working on problems of understanding their community and its relation to the state.

In a short time Mrs. Brown, the teacher, returned. Calmly and casually she fitted into the work of the class in a manner that guided and assisted the group without her becoming the center of attention. Somehow, Mrs. Brown managed to comprehend the work of each person. She quickly seemed to grasp the status of each student's activity. There was a nod, a smile, a word of praise, a suggestion or a thought-provoking question for each person or group.

As the visitors raised questions and made observations on the work in progress, the nature of the learning environment became more and more impressive. What was the story behind such a setting? How had the group progressed to the present high-level way of work? What were children learning? Such questions could not be answered readily; too many influences had shaped the development of the program.

The group learned that Mrs. Brown had worked in this rural school for seven years. The story of these seven years tells graphically of the vision, the struggle and the work which alone made possible the present program.

The School Seven Years Ago

All the workers
in the school
affect the
learning
environment.

When Mrs. Brown first started teaching at her rural school, the faculty consisted of two teachers and a lunchroom worker. The teacher of grades one through four was twenty years old. She had had two years of college work and had taught at this same place the previous year. This primary-grade teacher was an attractive person, but her training had not helped her become aware of the educational needs of the community.

The lunchroom worker had been in the same job for seven years. Although the food was well-prepared, this person was not sensitive to many problems of nutrition and sanitation. Early in the year she had informed the teachers that they were to do the teaching—she would do the cooking. As the teachers worked with parents on school problems, they had made efforts to improve the lunchroom.

Mrs. Brown was the third member of the school staff. Holding a master's degree with a major in Latin, she had

taught for twenty-four years, six of these as a critic teacher in a high school connected with a teachers college. This was her first elementary school teaching experience. Perhaps her genuine interest in children, her sensitivity to local needs and her skill in fostering effective human relations were the school's greatest assets. Also, she possessed marked leadership ability, working effectively with children and parents. She knew the local community and its resources.

The School Buildings and Grounds

A description of the school building and grounds seven years ago is a dismal one. The yard was overgrown with weeds except for those spots which were so severely eroded that even weeds would not grow. The building badly needed paint on the outside.

Inside, the picture of gloom deepened. One side of the hall was lined with a rickety enclosure used as a coat room. It was of rough lumber, and several of its doors were hanging by single hinges. It had once been painted a terrible "schoolhouse brown." Walls and ceilings had been a deep cream, but were so overlaid with dirt and soot that the color was almost indiscernible. The floors had been oiled until they were almost black. They were uneven and splintered so badly that walking on them was dangerous for the barefooted children. The picture was one of utter dejection. The desks—dark, dirty, carved and written upon—were nailed securely to the floor. And scattered over the floor were paper, old books, notebooks and ashes from the three coal stoves. The only source of artificial light was a sixty-watt bulb in the center of each room—a hopelessly inadequate source of light, especially on rainy days.

The school building consisted of four rooms: a lunchroom, a "music room" with a stage and the two classrooms. The hall, about fourteen feet wide, ran the length of one classroom. Both classrooms were too small for effective teaching, and the music room was a waste of space. The lunchroom had an old coal stove as its sole appliance. The necessary tables and benches completed its equipment.

The well had a hand pump, and drinking water in the hall was supplied from kegs with faucets attached. The kegs had

The physical plant has a bearing on the learning environment.



Parents share
in improving the
school
environment.

about "fallen to staves" and had to be soaked before they were usable.

In a desperate attempt to get started, Mrs. Brown located the president of the P.T.A. and went to her for help. A day was planned for clean-up. At the appointed time, only half of the patrons appeared, but their afternoon of hard work paid off. Parents had helped the school in past years. They were eager to assist. School opened the following Monday in a building reasonably clean and with a yard free of weeds and litter.

The School Program

In the upper-grade room seven years ago, thirty pupils were enrolled. The fifth grade consisted of two boys. One of them was an average fifth grader. The other was an over-age boy who had been promoted to the "big room" to get him away from the smaller children. He could barely read in a pre-primer.

In the sixth grade there were four girls belonging to families of tenant farmers. One of them had already attended six different schools, and the others almost as many. Only

one of this group completed the eighth grade with Mrs. Brown; the others continued to move from community to community and from school to school.

The seventh and eighth grades were about equal in number, but the eighth grade had several students with unusually high achievement records. On the other hand, the seventh grade had several students with very poor academic records.

The familiar pattern was day-by-day, page-by-page assignments in the textbooks. The seventh and eighth grades had been combined for social studies and reading. The day's program had consisted of separate subjects for each of the separate grades. This made thirty-five or more lessons!

If there had been any long-term planning by pupils and teachers, it was not evident. Instead, the methods of planning had been dictatorial, which resulted in student apathy, resentment or disciplinary problems.

Several basic beliefs about teaching influenced the early planning for improvement of the appalling conditions found at the school. Among these beliefs were the following:

The belief that what the child does twenty-four hours a day, twelve months a year, affects his learning environment.

The belief that a child learns in a variety of ways and that the environment in which he learns is important.

The belief that good teachers attempt to identify important needs to be met.

The School Needs

What needed to be done? Mrs. Brown states it this way:

First of all, the pupils needed to understand that the teacher was not a tyrant to be outwitted whenever possible; that lessons could be meaningful; that citizenship was not something to be studied about and allowed to stop there; that it was their school and not the teacher's; that what each one did, good or bad, was important to the teacher in helping her know each pupil.

Furthermore, something had to be done about the lunchroom—the lack of sanitation, the inadequate menus, the bad manners, and the casual visitors who took up the cook's time. The bad lighting of the classrooms was ruining the children's eyes; there was no place to hang wraps; by the time the water was ready for drinking it had been contaminated; the out-

Regimentation
and autocratic
methods
produce
discipline
problems.

How children
feel about
teachers and
the school
affects their
learning.

door toilets were a disgrace; and the stoves served to warm only a small group at a time while the rest shivered. Also, the group needed to use the stage and music room to relieve congestion in the classrooms.

The classes needed to be organized and conducted so that more effective learning could take place, and so that the teacher's days would not simply be exhausting marathons of trying to get through thirty-five lessons.

One of the most difficult problems was the bitter, deep-rooted dissension in the community, described by the county superintendent as chronic. This, of course, was reflected in the attitudes and actions of the children.

Creative
teaching is
founded on a
real interest
in children.

Certainly, all problems were not tackled at once. It seemed that as one problem was solved, others arose. There were days of heartbreak and discouragement, of disillusionment and even, perhaps, lost friendships. On the other hand, the teacher felt the intense satisfaction of seeing dreams come true; of seeing boys and girls develop their potentialities. It was a thrill to observe the effect of time spent working and achieving in a happy, clean, cheerful environment.

A Developing School

This was the school as it appeared seven years ago. The impact of the physical plant and the school program upon the learning environment was more than evident. The changes which emerged as the program and facilities were improved over the seven years were brought about by many people. Mrs. Brown played an important role in this story. The supervisor, county superintendent, parents and children also contributed greatly to this improvement of the learning environment.

The First Year

A barren
environment
depresses
growth.

Improvement of the health program seemed to be one of the most pressing needs during the first years. Health problems were constantly evident. Many of these had to do with needed changes in the physical plant, such as lighting, ventilation, pure water supply and lunchroom sanitation.

At one of the first P.T.A. meetings, the group voted to replace the ragged shades on the windows and to have new

lighting fixtures installed. Rather reluctantly, P.T.A. members bought double shades for the windows. Because World War II was then in progress, the purchase and installation of equipment took many weeks.

The lunchroom committee, composed of parents and teachers, was eager to make some changes. The president of the P.T.A. worked with the teachers in an effort to secure cooperation from the cook. An attempt was made to develop the lunchroom as an important learning center. Conditions were slightly improved after that, but only on the surface.

In the meantime, the P.T.A. had purchased an army surplus range which was an improvement over the old one. Its members also painted the lunchroom and its furniture.

The county sanitarian was invited to visit the school. He condemned the boys' toilet, and the county rebuilt it. The girls' toilet was renovated, and committees of students were selected to keep each of these rooms clean.

After much discussion, the pupils divided themselves into rotating committees to care for the building and grounds. They wanted to help keep their school clean; steadily they became more conscious of ways in which students could help.

There were so many health problems! The day-by-day caring for the school contributed its part to health discussions as groups discussed their activities and raised many questions about procedures. Why bother to use DDT on flies? Why should the dishes in the lunchroom be washed in a certain way? Why be immunized, visit the dentist, eat properly? Why rest after lunch, avoiding vigorous exercise? Why use double window shades? How do the new lights benefit the eyes? There were so many current health problems to be solved that frequently the lesson in the health text was not discussed. One day the group scrubbed and varnished the desks, washed the windows and oiled the floors. This group did not have a formal health lesson at all that day.

The county superintendent felt that the teacher should be "having lessons" and suggested that the group was wasting time bothering about the lunchroom. Nevertheless, as parents and children began to understand the health problems of their school and to make progress in solving them, they

Situations
are planned
which foster
pupil
initiative.

Learning
becomes
purposeful for
the pupils.

recognized the importance of continuing their planned activities.

Cooperation
usually results
when parents
understand the
goals of the
school.

Progress was also being achieved in a variety of other ways. Children were improving in citizenship, and parents were becoming convinced that the work of the school had merit. There was a gradual change in the attitude of the boys and girls. Even by Halloween of the first year, such improvement was evident. That year they paid the school only a token call, leaving a roll of paper towels on the teacher's desk to prove their presence, instead of committing the acts of vandalism typical of previous years. Very little carving and writing appeared on the desks which the students themselves had varnished. Fights on the school ground decreased to a notable extent. There were fewer outbursts of profanity and vulgarity among the children.

At the beginning, classes were conducted very much as they had been in the past. Gradually, very gradually, pupils began to recognize relationship between geography and history, between civics and forestry. They soon realized that whenever they gave an oral or written report in history, they were doing work in English just as though they had used one of the subjects in their English textbook.

Diagnosis of
learning
difficulties can
assist self-
improvement.

Attention was also given to children's achievement in various skills. The standardized tests administered near the beginning of the year revealed a woeful lack of knowledge and skill in arithmetic and spelling. So they spent much time on the fundamental skills. In place of the usual four separate arithmetic classes of fifteen minutes each, the pupils began working together informally in groups for the entire hour. In such groups each pupil could work at his own level and on his own problems in arithmetic. Pupils in these groups finally learned to work on their learning difficulties in arithmetic rather than to spend so much time at the board displaying what they already knew. They learned also to ask the teacher for assistance in attacking a problem rather than to copy from each other solutions to the tasks the teacher assigned them.

Whenever possible, drill devices were used which enabled each group to work independently. Often these devices took



the form of games. "Baseball" was a favorite. Sometimes there were four "baseball" arithmetic games going simultaneously, with the teacher serving as umpire of all of them. It was the teacher's opinion that the children learned many things besides the particular point in arithmetic, for they developed self-control, a sense of fair play and the realization that school can be fun and that arithmetic is important.

Drill was provided for each individual as needed. The entire group drilled together whenever possible. Nouns in the fifth grade and in the eighth grade are not too different. They soon dispensed with formal writing lessons except on certain fundamentals in which all needed help. They began to take pride in writing legibly because much of their work was checked with the pupil at the teacher's side. Any glaring error which occurred frequently was discussed during drill periods.

During the last quarter of the year the eighth-grade boys and girls decided to give a play. From the admissions they cleared twenty dollars. With this money they bought a medicine cabinet and an electric clock which they presented to the school at the closing exercises of the year.

By opening the folding doors, the upper-grade room and

Drill is adjusted
to individual
differences.

Plant facilities
are used for
many purposes.

the music room could be combined. Additional space, which was now available, was used to establish a reading center in the music room. But when the weather became unbearably cold, the entire group had to retreat to the classroom and close the folding doors.

Thus, by the end of the first year, Mrs. Brown was working with some groups in the classroom proper, other groups in the reading center and usually with other groups in the lunchroom.

The Second Year

The school year 1946-47 began with a new cook for the lunchroom. She was scrupulously clean and an excellent member of the school staff. Also, a new primary teacher took over the first four grades.

The children, all of whom had become acquainted with a better way of teaching during Mrs. Brown's first year, fitted easily into an improved schedule at the beginning of the new school year.

Among the group was an unclassified, retarded boy who needed much individual assistance from the teacher. With the help of the supervisor, he was given an abundance of reading material within his ability. Most valuable for him was a series of readers for illiterate adults. These were borrowed from a nearby university. There was only limited time for the teacher to spend with this boy, but during his experience in this room, he showed improvement in many ways. For example:

The total setting
affects social,
emotional,
physical and
mental
development.

He progressed from illiteracy to fourth-grade level in reading.

He learned to add and subtract at third-grade level.

He learned to write a neat and legible hand.

He learned how to find information in an encyclopedia or dictionary.

He learned to make change.

He learned to take some part in group discussions and to serve on committees.

He learned to play with children of his chronological age instead of with much younger ones.

His health improved tremendously after follow-up treatments recommended by a clinic.



This boy is now working in Chicago at a good wage. The learning environment created in this school was beginning to make its contribution to the growth of individual pupils.

The fifth grade was made up of eleven students. These boys and girls were enthusiastic about the meaningful activities of Mrs. Brown's room. Near the beginning of the year, the standardized tests showed that only two of the eleven had fifth-grade reading ability; the median reading level was at third grade. Although the fifth-grade class concentrated

on the improvement of its reading, materials were ordered to help each individual in all grades. Within two years everyone in the room, except the retarded boy, was reading at his normal grade level.

Early in the year, the P.T.A. bought a refrigerator and a three-compartment sink for the lunchroom. The federal lunchroom program paid for part of these. The Board of Education was persuaded to buy paint for the building—inside and out. The Board also hired painters for the outside work and the ceiling; however, a group of patrons, mostly women, painted the remainder of the building.

A challenging problem stimulates learning.

The entire group, grades five through eight, studied the problem of erosion and discovered its deadly work in the front yard. The eighth graders gave a play. With part of the money from the play, they bought fertilizer, lime and permanent pasture seed. They brought teams of horses and tools from home and sowed the front lawn according to suggestions made by their 4-H Club agent. The remaining twenty-five dollars realized from the play was paid on the purchase of a set of encyclopedias.



The Third Year

The 1947-48 school year again brought a new primary teacher to the school. She was a hard-working, conscientious teacher whose native intelligence made up somewhat for her lack of training in teaching methods. She did much to help the children in her room and was interested in every phase of their development.

At the beginning of the year, the children, patrons and teachers observed with pride the improvements of the past two years. They began to consider what else might be done. During the discussion the group was asked to consider the question, "If you could have exactly the kind of school you want, what would it be?" They listed not only the physical features needed, but the intangibles as well. It was not long before someone expressed the opinion that their desires for an improved school could become a reality through good planning, cooperation and hard work.

Among the physical improvements suggested were central heat, indoor toilets (there was just one indoor bathroom in the entire community), hardwood floors, new desks and a multitude of other things they had discovered in other schools. Available for the group to study was a collection of pictures clipped from magazines depicting modern schools. If other schools could have these things, why couldn't this school? Some of the discussions centered on campus beautification. The P.T.A. became so much interested that it asked a representative of the University Extension Service for assistance. Under his guidance, a long-term plan was developed. At intervals, both patrons and pupils have worked on this project. They have not yet achieved all the things listed in the original plan, but the school ground today shows extraordinary improvement over the conditions which existed several years ago.

Early in the year, the Board of Education installed an electric pump for the well. The P.T.A. had the water piped to the building, purchased a new drinking fountain for the hall and piped the water to an outdoor drinking fountain.

Excitement was mounting. The group could scarcely believe that these changes were actually real! The superintendent was asking the County Court to float bonds for extensive

Pupils, parents and teachers cooperate in evaluating and making future plans.

Consultant services of an outside expert often can strengthen local school planning.



improvements in some of the county's six high school centers. Led by one of the magistrates and a banker, groups of aroused citizens in various sections of the county began asking why the smaller schools could not secure their share of improvements. A series of pictures and articles in the local papers depicted the dreadful conditions in the smaller schools. Tremendous pressure was brought to bear on those in control. The result was a bond issue earmarked for use in the small schools in addition to the one for the larger schools.

The interest that Mrs. Brown's boys and girls took in all these happenings was amazing. Pupils promptly calculated the approximate share of the money for their school, which they estimated to be about five thousand dollars. The pupils, parents and teachers did not know whether they would be consulted about the improvements wanted, but they made plans just the same.

During the summer of 1948, the County Board of Education installed new lights and new shades at the school. September ushered in a new county superintendent. His work placed greater emphasis on the welfare of children than had been true in previous administrations. He had time to visit

the school and discuss the needs of the school with parents, pupils and teachers.

The Fourth Year

The P.T.A. held many meetings which the county superintendent attended. His theme seemed to be, "What kind of school do you want your children to have? What do you want the school to do for your child? How can all of us working together bring that about?" The children held many informal discussions with him about their ideas.

The school in the district of the magistrate who sparked the fight for the bond issue was the first to be improved. But the newly appointed maintenance man for the smaller schools found time to come with the superintendent to Mrs. Brown's school for the purpose of studying needs. Finally, in the early winter the students were told that they could have installed immediately indoor rest rooms and a central heating system, provided they could get along without the construction of extra rooms.

In spite of all their planning, the above decision caught the children and teacher off guard, for they had planned for additional space to house these facilities. Before going home that day, the upper-grade group had placed the rest rooms in about every spot in the building. The suggestions of the children were summarized and put into a tentative plan, which was presented to all the pupils. They could find no objection to it. For arithmetic that day, a scale drawing of the plan was made. When the maintenance man arrived, he liked the plan; and the school was off to new heights of achievement.

Pupils and teachers were asked if work should be postponed until school closed to avoid confusion. Should they wait? No! There now followed a period that could have been pandemonium, yet was not. In discussions, children and teachers decided that it was easier to work under favorable conditions, but that it was a real challenge to work calmly with plumbing, carpentering and tinsmithing going on simultaneously and deafeningly!

Then, indeed, the self-discipline of the pupils paid dividends! The pupils had become accustomed to much individual or small-group learning. Even amid the din, they went on

Administrative leadership enables parents and children to participate in decisions affecting them.

Arithmetic abilities become functional when applied to a meaningful situation.



Self-discipline
helps the
children adjust
to trying
situations.

with their work, looking up sometimes to smile at a workman, and feeling free to talk with him if they had any questions they wanted to ask. The confusion lasted about three or four months. The tools, paint and brushes were kept in an unprotected place. Not once were the tools tampered with in any way. The workmen praised the pupils for their continuing effective school work as the project was carried on.

The children were asked to choose the color scheme for the interior of the building. They chose a soft light green for the walls, with a darker green about three feet high from the floor, and snow white enamel for the doors and windows. The light, natural-finish desk chairs which replaced the old desks, together with new shades and lights, offered a striking contrast to the dismal school which Mrs. Brown had entered in 1945. Although a new floor was out of the question, there was a beautiful inlaid linoleum floor in each rest room, and the pupils were eager for their turn to keep it shining.

The installation of the septic tank was a wonderful thing for the pupils to watch. The county sanitarian supervised its

construction, painstakingly explaining its operation and construction, and patiently answering the endless questions of the children.

Observing the installation of an oil furnace with its thermostat and cold air intakes was another experience which raised many questions and created new learning experiences for the pupils.

At mid-year, the teacher of the first four grades was replaced by another temporary teacher who had been promised the place if one with a certificate was not hired. Even when the construction work forced the crowding of the lower and upper grades together into one room, both teachers managed to keep the children working well under the circumstances.

In January, a health contest for county schools was announced. Merchants and civic clubs, with the cooperation of the County Health Department and the County Board

Real-life
situations
provide
concrete
learning
experiences.



of Education, were its sponsors. The first prize was twenty-five dollars. All prizes totaled one hundred ten dollars. The health coordinator explained that it was a health improvement contest. Mrs. Brown's group of children felt that they, too, could improve their health.

Ignoring the noise, confusion and the odor of paint, they analyzed their health practices. The children were asked to make suggestions for improvement. The bulletin issued for the contest divided the points to be achieved into individual improvements, school improvements, utilization of resource materials and people, and the integration of health with other subjects.

Surveys
disclosing
health problems
can lead to
corrective
measures.

Individual surveys showed that many pupils did not eat breakfast, did not drink enough milk, and needed immunizations. Home surveys showed many simple improvements that could be made. The children also selected a number of major health objectives for the school. Of course, the work already under way on the building could not be counted, but the P.T.A. bought an automatic water heater and *that* could be counted. Also, they could count the swings, see-saws and other equipment being made for the playground.

The parents cooperated in the project and soon dental and immunization certificates were displayed in abundance. Most of the pupils greatly improved their health habits. They managed to include health problems with other areas being studied and to get the summaries of their work displayed and improvements summarized in time for the visit of the judges on the first of April. Winning the first prize as well as achieving improved health more than repaid children and teachers for all their hard work.

A part of the prize money was used to buy several hammers and a long extension cord which was necessary for using the record player out of doors. The remainder of the money was put into a fund which grew into enough within a year to buy an additional set of encyclopedias.

With the workmen gone and the health contest over, students devoted as much time as possible to their regular work. Having decided that a school council should be organized, the children elected officers. Because there were many visitors,



the pupils decided that a hospitality committee was needed. Visitors were greeted, shown around, and generally looked after by this group. The school council discussed everything from playground rules to lunchroom manners. The teacher, supervisor and parents were amazed at the ingenuity of the pupils in planning and organizing.

The Fifth Year

The 1949-50 school year was significant for the unusually good work accomplished by the pupils. They had learned how to attack a problem, decide upon objectives, devise means of achieving these objectives and then display what they had learned in a variety of ways so that other children, parents and visitors could see what they were doing. They continued to practice the good health habits instilled by participation in the health contest. They worked in committees or individually as the occasion demanded. As an outgrowth of work on problems in nutrition, the older girls made a large frieze for the lunchroom wall. This frieze showed Mistress Mary carefully tending her garden and explaining in verse the virtues of each of its "Basic 7" foods. Students made Christmas corsages of acorns and pine cones. To add to their encyclopedia fund, the children sold more than one hundred of these attractive corsages. Later on, an evening of short plays, in which each child took part, completed the raising of the amount of money needed.

Experiences
are planned
which help
children deal
with social
situations.

Those who attended high school after completing the eighth grade reported that science was their hardest subject. As a result, teachers tried to include more science experiences in the children's work. The eighth grade gave a play and bought a science kit for the school. This contained the apparatus necessary for the performance of simple experiments. Additional science experiences added greatly to the pupils' interest and information. Moreover, the services and resources of the regional library service were secured. The additional books provided opportunities for extending pupils' understandings of the science problems being studied. The 4-H Club contributed additional science equipment and reference materials.

A gap in the
curriculum
is filled.

For social studies, the plan followed provided for each



pupil in the room to work on the same theme for the year. One year all members of the group studied the state and its history; the next year they studied the United States; the third year was devoted to studying world history. All the social studies and as much of the health and science activities as possible were related to real problems. Moreover, emphasis was placed on arts and language arts in all studies undertaken by the group.

After four years the first group to complete grades five

Relating school
to life
experiences
builds a
foundation for
high school
success.

through eight with Mrs. Brown was ready for high school. The teacher felt that the success of these pupils would depend to some extent upon their elementary school experience. She was aware that in a measure it was a test of the informal atmosphere that she had developed in the school. They made an excellent record in high school.

The Sixth Year

In 1950-51, the study of the state was begun with a study of the local community and the county. About the time the pupils were wondering just how to organize all the information being collected about their county, they were asked to be responsible for the P.T.A. program for November.

Each fall the county sponsors a livestock and products show, and the children, all ardent 4-H'ers, are enthusiastic about it. Someone suggested having a school fair and letting each committee have a booth to display its findings. The children made a number of trips to collect information, they wrote numerous letters, and they invited about twenty people to speak to the class. Evaluating and chart-making followed each trip and each speech. All good fairs have ribbons and prizes, and so did the school fair. The judges were supervisors from neighboring counties. When the P.T.A. met, representatives from each committee reported the findings of that group. Afterward, the parents visited the booths, received souvenirs, and in many other ways acted as they would at a real fair.

The children
learn much
from an
interesting
visual device.

Another highlight of that year was a unit on "Making a Living in Our State" in which the pupils learned to use materials sent out by the Planning Commission and other agencies. A huge state map was drawn to scale on paper spread on the floor in the rear of the room. It was beautifully painted to show the major divisions. Large cities and important places were marked. As pupils discussed places of interest, they actually walked across the map to the point under consideration. They enjoyed this experience very much.

A number of important improvements in the school plant took place during the year. In the original blueprint drawn for building improvements by parents and children was a

science cabinet with a sink to be placed in the rear of the upper-grade room. There was little hope of getting it until the day when the superintendent and a maintenance worker recognized the need. Thus, the science cabinet was installed. Plans were also made to install hardwood floors during that summer. Early in the year, the P.T.A. had bought an electric range for the lunchroom. Inspired by the promise of the new floors in the classrooms and hall, it installed new wall-to-wall linoleum in the lunchroom.

The Seventh Year

The fall of 1951-52 presented a scare. There was a possibility that reduced enrollment resulting from the marriage of several eighth-grade pupils would mean the loss of a teacher. It was found, however, that even with these losses, there was an adequate enrollment to keep two teachers for the school.

The new floors were a definite improvement. What a different picture from that first dismal year! Recently, a visitor from outside the county exclaimed, "I wish everybody in the state could see this schoolroom." And it is a marvelous school room—light, airy, large and clean. One thing most visitors say is, "Oh, you have new desks!" Pupils are proud to tell them that, although their desks look new, they have been used almost four years.

The standardized tests given the five eighth-grade children early in the year showed a class median of 9.2, with no one below the eighth-grade level in any subject. Some students had reading scores at the twelfth-grade level. Even though their lessons were not organized according to grade level, they had mastered the fundamentals—and a great deal more.

There were seven pupils in the seventh grade, six in the sixth grade, and eight in the fifth grade. Four pupils in the fifth grade had not reached a fifth-grade level in reading, were over-age, and were oversize for their age. For one reason or another, they had not learned in four years what some children learn in one.

A survey of world history was the most important activity for all children during the year. The course of civilization was traced as it moved westward. The group developed some understandings of feudalism and the Renaissance. Most of

Standardized tests show that an experience curriculum can foster significant gains in skills.

the work was done in committees. Opportunities were created frequently for sharing, evaluating and planning next steps. The teacher sought opportunities for clarification of understandings for the entire group. Charts were made of the most important facts. Committees reported their findings, and current news reports were studied and related to their work.

The new science cabinet helped to stimulate the group in placing much emphasis on science problems. The new county music consultant made music a joy. She helped produce an operetta at Christmas, and the group joined in the county-wide music festival.

With the additional facilities and school improvements which have now been provided, the pupils, parents and teachers have come to recognize some of the marked changes which have occurred. Furthermore, the people are now more keenly aware of many problems in their homes and in the community. There is an interest in continuing studies of these local problems and obtaining the resources with which to meet them. The community realizes that much still needs to be done and that the improvements in the school program and facilities which have been made during the past seven years are but a beginning.

The task of improving the school environment is continuous.

A Typical Day at the School

The day begins at about 7:00 A.M. when the first teacher arrives. By 7:15 the bus unloads the children, some of whom have been riding since 6:30, for this bus serves five elementary schools and a high school center. Because these children are aware of their strengths and weaknesses, they make good use of this early morning time before the school day actually starts. They practice some difficult skill, work on a group activity, use art materials or read. If the weather permits, some pupils play outdoors. A surprising number utilize this morning hour for study.

Orderly routine is a helpful part of an environment.

The time of Mrs. Brown's arrival at school depends on how many stops she makes along the way. Sometimes she travels an additional ten miles to pick up perishable lunch-room supplies. Frequently there is a patron or wholesale salesman waiting at school to see her. No matter what Mrs.



Brown is doing at 8:15, talking to a visitor or helping a child, the president of the room rings the bell. The pupils take their seats in an orderly manner. The primary group is always included in the morning assembly meetings. The president calls the meeting to order and turns the assembly over to the committee responsible for the devotional for that day. After this, the minutes of the previous day's work are read, corrected and approved.

After the primary children leave, the upper-grade boys and

girls work out their plans for the day with Mrs. Brown. They settle down to work, carrying out their plans whether or not Mrs. Brown is in the room. At 8:30 there is a news broadcast, which frequently stimulates discussion. The group works until 10:30.

Effective
learning
requires a
balance of
individual,
group and class
activities.

At any time anyone may get a drink or go to the rest room if he checks first to see that no one else is out. Very rarely has this privilege been misused. The pupils work in groups or individually as seems most suitable to their tasks—at the board, on the floor, at their desks, or in some other part of the building. They have freedom to work as long as they do not interfere with others. For the most part, the committees are made up of pupils from three or four grades. In this way the younger students learn how to secure and organize information much faster than they would in their own grade levels. The teacher is constantly busy helping individuals or groups. On some days they spend part or all of the time in planning. Sometimes they spend the time listening to reports or looking at displays made by different groups. At every opportunity they listen to those who have made a special study of the problem or topic under consideration.

From 10:30 until 11:00, there is supervised play. Pupils may eat an apple or an orange; sometimes fruit juice or canned fruit is served in the lunchroom. No other food is served before lunch, though before school opens pupils may get milk in the lunchroom. The activities in physical education are planned by the pupils either daily or weekly. There is enough variety for both boys and girls so that all may participate. On rainy days the chairs are moved back against the wall for folk dancing and games. The classroom becomes a gymnasium, not for basketball, but for appropriate indoor games.

From 11:00 until noon, either science or health activities may be carried on—sometimes both. Frequently these are tied in so closely with social studies that it is difficult to distinguish them. At other times experiments or discussions are typical activities. There are daily charts to check concerning nutrition and dental care. Pupils are urged to stay at home when they are ill, and any pupil who gets sick at school is promptly taken home. The children of the "little room" have



their lunch at 11:30, since the lunchroom is too small to accommodate both groups at once.

At 12:00, noon, the older group goes to lunch. The pupils wash their hands, and lunch is served cafeteria style. When all are seated, the president calls on the one who has been appointed to say grace. Although eating is informal, the children practice good manners. There is a free flow of conversation. Pupils take turns as hosts or hostesses for their tables, serve second helpings, and assist as needed. It is evident that there is a pleasant spirit. An effort is made to recognize birthdays and holidays and to make the noon period informal and educational.

After lunch, the pupils take their dishes to the counter, scrape and stack them. Some of the boys take the cases of empty milk bottles to the porch.

For a while after they return to the room, they hear a local news broadcast or listen to records. Occasionally the teacher reads to them.

The entire group now works until 2:15 on arithmetic, language and spelling. The amount of time spent on a certain subject area is determined by the need. The pupils check

The lunchroom provides opportunity for many kinds of learning.



their own work. The written work is checked individually for correct usage. Arithmetic and spelling are frequently handled on a "test-teach-test" basis, so that the children may work on the points that are difficult for them.

At 2:15, there is a thirty-minute play period supervised by the teacher. The remaining thirty minutes of the day are described as "Appreciation Time." Frequently there is music, often there are volunteer book reports, and sometimes there are sessions of audience reading.

At 3:15, school is out. The pedestrians go home. Those who wait for the bus assist in cleaning or arranging the room, study, listen to the radio or record player, or play. In good weather the bus arrives about 4:30. As a safety measure, the pupils line up for loading (the only lining-up of the day). They wave good-bye. Another day is finished at Mrs. Brown's two-room rural school.

A changed
environment
sometimes
focuses
attention upon
a variety of
forces affecting
learning.

This, then, has been the story of Mrs. Brown and her efforts to create an effective learning situation in a rural school. The environment so created focused attention upon the variety of forces affecting the health, achievement, citizenship

and security of children in the school. A key to the progress achieved was the cooperation secured from parents.

It should also be pointed out that the county school system of which this school is a member facilitated the work of the school. Educational planning was going on through the work of the superintendent and county supervisor, especially as the program developed. No effort was made to block the development of new or different programs. The supervisor was a continuing source of aid and encouragement.

The learning environment created in this school reflects the vision of a teacher, of children and of parents. The teacher, who also happened to be a principal, held the key position in developing this vision.

A teacher's vision and leadership can help improve the community and its school.



INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER IV

This account of a six-weeks' unit of work in a seventh-grade core class demonstrates the potentialities of this approach in developing both the communication skills of a typical English class and the social concepts and understandings of a social studies class. It further demonstrates the fact that when this method is used and students become truly concerned about real problems of living, then there is greater retention of learning and greater influence on actual behavior. A possible key to the success of this particular learning experience lies in the fact that the problem around which the unit centers—improving the school grounds—is a simple, clear, concrete problem, about which seventh-grade students might readily become concerned.

A Seventh-Grade Group in a Suburban Junior High School

THIS story took place in a small community of about 5000 people on the Eastern seaboard. Because of its location midway between two large metropolitan centers, the community has a cosmopolitan atmosphere in a small-town setting. Part of this may be attributed to the fact that, although a large portion of the residents are native to the area, the town's proximity to a large military installation has brought many transient families to the area. In addition, the transient population is swelled considerably throughout the greater part of the year by people interested in the local race track. This community annually has a month of spring racing and a month of fall racing. During the summer, too, the trotting track is in operation.

Most of the residents are of an average income group. Generally speaking, the homes are not pretentious but are mostly single unit dwellings with attractively kept premises. The automobiles lining the streets in the residential areas are of recent vintage, and a television aerial sprouts from almost every roof top. Within the past three years, large apartment developments have been constructed. In some of the old sections of town, however, the properties have deteriorated and are in need of repair or replacement. Families living outside of town own small farms or suburban estates. Although the land is not poor, neither is it rich. Therefore these farms provide the necessities of life plus a few luxuries, such as automobiles and television sets.

The people here have always recognized the importance of education, and as early as 1898 they established the first public high school in the county. This school was well-built and contained four large classrooms. The old section of the school is still in use and comprises the hub of the present enlarged school plant. As the school population increased, four classrooms and an auditorium were added in 1935. In 1949, a second addition was completed, consisting of a gymnasium,

cafeteria and six new classrooms. During this period, the interior was rearranged and a library was added.

In 1946, as a result of state-wide studies of the needs of youth, a core program was instituted for the junior high school students. In-service education courses in this area were also made available, and teachers were encouraged to teach the core program as they envisioned it. The administrative staff worked to promote advanced techniques in core teaching and encouraged teachers to learn about and to try the newer trends in presentation. The principal of this school understood the purposes of the core program and therefore was encouraging and cooperative in providing this type of learning experience. At the present time, learning units are teacher-pupil planned and are drawn from resource units based on the county-designated problem areas at each grade level. These resource units are developed by teachers in the county-wide in-service education program for core teachers. The designated problem areas in the seventh grade are: "Exploring Our Educational Opportunities," "Achieving Good Intercultural and/or International Relations," and "Maintaining Body Efficiency." The major emphases in the following story of a learning unit seem to be that a good environment for learning is created (a) when pupils are encouraged to use a wide variety of appropriate resources—both in people and in materials—and varied techniques in solving their problems; (b) when the problem for study is chosen through teacher-pupil planning; and (c) when the problem selected for study lends itself at least to a partial solution by the students.

The Story

During the summer, the core teachers of the county held a workshop. One of the problem areas¹ designated for use in the seventh grade was entitled, "Exploring Our Educational Opportunities." It is important to note that a resource unit² is not

¹ *Problem Area:* A problem area is a broad pre-planned area of living in which students usually have problems. These areas represent the basic curricular structure of the school. Problem areas are set up by the faculty of a school in terms of a study of psychobiological and societal needs, problems and interests of students.

² *Resource Unit:* A resource unit is a systematic and comprehensive survey, analysis and organization of the possible resources (e. g., problems, issues, activities, bibliographies, etc.) which a teacher might utilize in planning, developing and evaluating a learning unit.

a learning unit.* The latter is planned jointly by teacher and pupils and is closely related to the particular needs and interests of the pupils. Several possibilities for learning units in this problem area were explored at this time by the faculty of the Lincoln Junior High School. Suggestions thought to be particularly suited to the needs of pupils in this school were: "Improving the Appearance of the School Grounds," "Evaluating Our Conduct in Halls, Cafeteria and Auditorium" and "Working Together To Improve Our School Lunch Program."

About three weeks before school opened, the principal met with the seventh-grade core teachers to discuss the possibilities which the school and community had to offer for carrying through on such units. Because the school itself is attractive, they anticipated that the students would have a real interest in its appearance. They hoped, too, that the students themselves would notice some aspects of the school campus which could be improved. The principal offered full cooperation wherever and whenever he might be needed.

Following this conference, one core teacher met with the school librarian and together they went over the materials available in the school library. The librarian offered to write to the State Library Extension Service and to confer with the county materials' supervisor about the possibility of securing books, audio-visual materials, and pamphlets which deal with landscape planning. From a catalog of films available in the library, the teacher ordered several films in advance so that these would be sent to the school when needed.

Monday, September 8, the first day of school, was one of routine organization. In one seventh-grade core class there were forty children, while in the other there were thirty-nine. In size, each core classroom was nineteen feet wide and twenty-eight feet long. In each were forty movable desks, book shelves, blackboards and a small bulletin board. Obviously, the physical conditions in these rooms were hardly of the best for carrying on a core program.

Resource units can provide teachers with background and sources of materials.

Staff pre-planning insures coordinated use of learning resources.

* *Learning Unit*: A comprehensive unit of work directly related to the needs, problems and interests of a particular group of students. A learning unit is preferably developed through teacher-pupil planning. It is usually drawn from possibilities suggested by a resource unit developed within the scope of the problem areas which form the basic curricular structure of the core program.

Initial
pupil-teacher
planning
identifies
important
needs.

Next day, the pupils discussed some of the problems which were facing them as seventh graders entering junior high school. Their basic problem, they decided, was that they had to learn to live in a different school setting from the one to which they had been accustomed. As far as the teachers were concerned, it seemed necessary to choose a learning unit in which pupils would get to know each other better, in which they would learn to understand better their new school and its program, and in which they would have ample opportunities to practice good citizenship and develop language arts skills.

The teacher asked the pupils to tell some of the things they liked about their new school. They named a variety of things, one of which was the appearance of the school and its grounds. Through discussion, the class brought out facts relating to the school's age and history. Most of these items were recalled from stories told by their parents and from older brothers and sisters. Some children said that they had studied about their community while attending the elementary school. They were anxious to contribute any information they could for the benefit of some of the new children who were attending school in this community for the first time.



As an outgrowth of the discussion concerning the beauty of the front campus, some of the children remarked that they had noticed several unattractive bare spots. The teacher then suggested that during their leisure at lunch time and after school they might survey the campus to see what improvements might be made.

Recognizing the importance of fundamental skills in a core program, the teacher next asked the pupils to write two paragraphs: the first, to describe the specific poor conditions they had discovered; the second, to explain what should be done to correct these conditions. Some children who rode buses thought that they might not have time to survey the campus and asked whether they could use a home situation on the same basis. It was agreed that they might do so.

The following morning, class members shared their findings. Some pupils proposed unique solutions to cope with situations they had found; some frankly said they did not know what should be done; and some children presented solutions thought by the class to be promising. Then the children began to realize that the approach to the problem should be made carefully and scientifically. Some felt that the science teacher



would surely have some helpful material. Recognizing that pupil learning has more continuity when teachers plan together, the science teacher agreed to plan his science unit to correlate with the core unit.

The children then scanned a film on permanent agriculture. The film showed how blighted areas are caused and also indicated various methods of control. Inasmuch as the children had made note of the eroded areas in their own front campus, this film led them to suggest possible solutions to the problem, "How can we control erosion on our campus?" During the discussion it became increasingly evident that interest in the beautification of the campus was running high. Children were offering many suggestions as to what they would like to do. Each suggestion, however, seemed to present a problem which would have to be solved first.

Tackling a
worth-while
problem
promotes
learning.

The class decided that the over-all purpose of their unit was to improve the appearance of the front campus. They recognized that a major problem in achieving this purpose was control of erosion on the campus. They, therefore, cooperatively set up the following questions as related to various facets of their problem:

How and when are we going to get enough money to buy the plants, seeds, bulbs and shrubs we need?

Where can we get plants, shrubs and other things?

What plants are we going to use?

What committees will we need?

How are we going to reclaim the ground before we plant?

How are we going to let people know what we are doing?

Who can give us permission to dig and to plant?

Where can we get expert advice to help us do a professional job?

What tools do we need and where will we get them?

How will our plants be cared for in the future?

After identifying the problems, the class divided into committees of three to five pupils. Each committee chose one problem and planned to formulate some possible solutions to it. One member from each committee made an oral report to the entire group regarding the findings of his committee. Members of the class made additional contributions to some committee reports.

The total group then did some tentative planning as to the specific plants and shrubs which would be most useful. They considered size, price and the area to be planted. Because it was difficult for them to picture the campus accurately in the classroom, group members went outside to prepare plans for various areas. They discussed how to keep people from sitting on the grass and running over the terraces, how to control water from a rain spout outside the classroom window, how to control erosion resulting from a drainpipe outside the auditorium, and how to prevent people from cutting corners.

After the class returned to its room, one of the pupils suggested that a committee should make a scale drawing of the campus so that in the future the group would not have to go out of doors every time a problem concerning the campus presented itself. Because Ted showed keen interest, the group agreed that he and a committee selected by him should begin the project immediately. Several pupils who were interested in photography brought cameras to school and took pictures of the areas which the class was planning to improve. They also were to take pictures of some of the later activities and to photograph the finished job.

Because many plants would be needed, the committee working on this phase of the problem thought that if the people in the community knew about it, they would want to help. This presented the problem of how to get publicity. The pupils immediately thought of the school paper and the town newspaper. None of the children had written a news story and so were completely unaware of the style required for such writing. There were eight different English books in the classroom and, although these contained a wealth of material on how to write a story, none explained how to write a news story. Because the teacher had had some journalistic experience, she explained some of the principal characteristics of newswriting.

Many children were confused when the teacher mentioned the nominative case, the objective case and third person. Some remembered having worked on these and other aspects of grammar in elementary school; many had forgotten. Frequently pupils forget some of the technicalities of our language be-

Learning activities based on a problem situation are numerous and varied.

A need for review of grammatical tools is recognized by pupils.

Interest in
correct form
comes when
writing for
publication.

cause of its intangibility in functional use. Class members thought it would be a good idea to review some of the important grammatical constructions; thus, the teacher and class together prepared a chart of this material and put it on the board for further reference.

With this problem clarified, each pupil began to try his hand at writing a news story. This writing had to be done outside of school because the period was over for the day. They were so enthusiastic, however, that the next morning every pupil brought in his "homework." Volunteers read their stories to the group. The class listened to many and then began the task of analyzing each in order to formulate the best possible lead paragraph. They took the best ideas from the stories they had heard read and finished the remainder of the story on a cooperative basis. Because that day was the deadline, they sent the story to the newspaper immediately, having first obtained permission from the principal. The paper came out with the story on page one. It was apparent that the editor thought the story well-written, because it appeared almost exactly as the class had written it.

SEVENTH GRADERS PLAN TO IMPROVE THEIR CAMPUS

The seventh graders at the Lincoln Junior High School are seeing to it that their campus is being graced with more than just their presence this year.

Back to school for the fall term, they have already developed a trend of arboreal interest, encouraged by their faculty advisors, Miss Forsyth, Mrs. Carr and Mr. Rinehart, and they hope to inspire other members of the school and community to help them.

Mary Hughes, reporter for the class, states that they have already written the County Board of Education for permission to correct drainage problems that exist on campus, thus getting a lesson in soil erosion at the same time. Later they will plant grass seed and several varieties of plants and shrubbery.

They solicit ideas and cooperation from residents of Lincoln in promoting their plan to beautify the campus. Will you help them?

As a result of the story, the class received many offers of shrubbery and small trees. Just as some of these plants were beginning to come in, a film arrived which described how to

plant a shade tree. This proved to be one of the most useful films viewed by the pupils. With two other seventh-grade core sections, they studied the motion picture in the auditorium and held a brief discussion-type review before leaving. Returning to the classroom, the group members listed the facts they considered important. Since they anticipated frequent reference to the material presented in this film, they agreed that it would be wise for each person to write an individual summary for his own use.

Use of a film stimulates fact-finding.

Soon after the unit began, some members of the group expressed a desire to keep a record of their experiences. It was suggested that the class secretary should be responsible for keeping a daily account of class activities. Other pupils felt that this account was going to be a big job and should be delegated to a committee which could be referred to as a diary committee. This latter procedure was agreed upon. The county supervisor of the core program came to visit the class on the day that the committee was organizing. She thought it was an excellent idea and was sure that it would prove to be a great help to the group. Since the unit had been under way about three weeks before this idea presented itself, the class decided to collaborate in attempting to recall what had been done during the preceding weeks. Various members of the group volunteered to write individual accounts of this.

By this time the project was beginning to receive more and more publicity. A class member announced one morning that her mother was listening to the radio and had heard about the core project on one of the programs.

The first real outdoor work began on Wednesday, September 24, when Dick's father brought a truck load of topsoil. The soil was needed for several areas where water from drains had washed away the original soil. The first control problem the pupils tackled was the easy one involving the drainpipe outside the core room window. First, the force of water was slowed by placing stones before the drainpipe to deflect the water. The gully was then partially filled with gravel and subsoil. The topsoil was put in place and a cover crop of wheat was sown. Burlap covering was laid over this to insure further the conservation of the topsoil.

A father contributes to the learning environment.



While one committee was working on this project, the rest of the pupils were surveying the next problem. A large gully was being created on the campus in front of the auditorium. Pupils traced its origin to water coming from the auditorium roof. When the building was first constructed, water from the drains was carried away from the auditorium by a drainpipe which went under the sidewalk. The campus descended in a terrace below this, and the drainpipe ended on the lower terrace. From this point on, the grass and topsoil had now been washed away. The children offered many solutions. One was to construct a drainage ditch about fifty feet long, which would drain the water across a sidewalk and into the school's circular driveway. This plan would necessitate putting a drainpipe under the sidewalk by the driveway. Constructing the drainpipe would be rather expensive and difficult, and many pupils were vociferous with their objections. The class therefore looked for some other solution.

A side street ran along the northwestern border of the auditorium; and on this street, curbings and sidewalks were lacking. Bob suggested digging a drainage ditch out to that gutter,

filling in the present gully and planting a cover crop. This seemed to be a good suggestion. Because the plan would necessitate some digging on the campus, the pupils thought it would be advisable to ask the principal for his opinion as to its practicality. The latter thought that the proposed plan was a good one but that it would present a grading problem. This difficulty could be solved, he believed, by using a level to avoid backwashing in the drainage ditch. He suggested that the class write a letter to the county supervisor of maintenance, requesting help and equipment from his department.

Following this suggestion the class engaged in a group project to compose a letter to the maintenance department. In the letter they asked for specific help, such as terra cotta pipe and tools for use in digging the drain. The prompt reply from the county supervisor surpassed their fondest expectations. As a first step, he offered to visit the school and discuss the plan with the pupils.

The following week, the county supervisor of maintenance came to school to discuss the problem with the class. A committee was sent out of doors to show him the area to be improved. Returning to the classroom, he said he thought the plan the class had in mind would be effective. Necessary materials, tools and two helpers were offered. A diagram was drawn to show how bricks could be utilized in lieu of the terra cotta pipe. The supervisor explained that bricks were readily available from an old school which had recently been razed. He instructed the class to measure the length of the proposed ditch, to ascertain the number of bricks needed and to send

A county agency provides materials and resources.



this information to the county office. He also suggested that the class request a date when the work would be done.

A news story reporting progress on the plan was written that same day and appeared exactly as prepared. Class members were well pleased with it and felt that through experience they had become more skillful in the art of writing a news account.

They next asked the mathematics teacher to help them compute the number of bricks needed by providing them an opportunity to work on the problem in the mathematics class. A few days later the class wrote the county maintenance department that it would like to do the work on Tuesday, October 21, and that 480 bricks would be needed for the job.

This is a diary account written for the day when the work was done.

October 21, 1952

Harry read his report for October 9, 1952. There were a few suggestions made. Mary read her report for October 20, 1952. Ann brought in some mimosa trees and chose Gloria, Allen and Bob to help plant them. The two Clark brothers came with a truck. Mr. C. Clark dumped cement and sand together and Harry mixed them. Some people were unloading bricks and stacking them, some were digging sod and placing it and some began lining off and digging the ditch. Mr. C. Clark told the boys to use ten shovels of sand and one bag of brick mortar and water. Susan and Alice went inside looking for a container in which to carry water. They couldn't find anything. Henry's idea was to use the metal waste basket from Mrs. Carr's room. Next, the two brothers put cement in the ditch and showed us how to mortar a brick and lay it. Mrs. Carr took some pictures of the men and children working together. Mrs. Carr and any students who wanted to had the opportunity to lay bricks, and many of them did.

The next day it was reported that several older boys in the school were overheard to remark, "Look at that ditch those dumb seventh graders made—we'll fix that on Halloween!" This report was quite disturbing because it had already become apparent that some of the other work of the class had fallen prey to vandalism. The class met this challenge by sending a committee to enlist the help of the principal. Before going to see the principal, they dramatized in class the manner in which the problem should be presented to him. The principal

Using
computational
skills in
problem-solving
situations makes
arithmetic
meaningful.

was deeply concerned about the situation and promised to do what he could to prevent it. An assembly had been scheduled for that afternoon and the principal utilized part of this time to explain to the older boys and girls the plans of the seventh grade and the work that they were doing. He told the older pupils that he was sure most of them appreciated the work which was being done and would disapprove any acts of vandalism. As a result of the principal's talk the work was not defaced during the Halloween week.

The school paper also did its part to gain the support of the student body for the seventh-grade project. The following editorial-type article appeared in the paper during the middle of the school year.

CORE PROJECT

During the first six months of this school year, the seventh-grade core classes undertook the project of beautifying our school grounds. They had eroded spots resodded, planted shrubbery and otherwise improved the appearance of the campus.

No one can deny that there has been a noticeable improvement as a result of the core project; BUT, without the cooperation of all the students in all classes, the campus cannot remain clean and attractive. *Don't let the seventh graders down!*

One morning, shortly after this article was published, a gift of several trees arrived at the school. Recalling that the movie describing how to plant a tree had emphasized the fact that a tree transplant should be done quickly to prevent shock, the pupils had to decide on short notice where these trees should be planted. They used the scale drawing which Ted and his committee had made and developed a tentative plan. Before planting, however, they thought that a committee should consult the principal to see if their plans met with his approval. First, they had a classroom dramatization of how the committee should present their ideas. In dramatizing the situation, the committee considered how to enter the office and request to see the principal; how to observe proper courtesies when introducing the committee to the principal; and how to word questions properly.

The school paper is used to develop positive attitudes and writing skills.

Role playing helps pupils prepare to ask for the principal's help.



Evaluation of
a product comes
when it is
tested in use.

During the actual interview, the principal gave the committee several helpful suggestions. Returning to their room, the committee reported these suggestions to the class. Then the committees which had been chosen for the various jobs went out to plant the trees in the suggested areas.

The scale drawing which had been prepared by Ted's committee was on a piece of paper 18" x 24". As the pupils attempted to use the drawing, they realized that it was difficult to indicate detailed plans on a chart of this size. They decided to enlarge it to mural size and extend it across the back of the room. Again they utilized the services of the mathematics department which estimated that a scale of 1 inch equals 16 feet would be needed for the mural. This new drawing was quickly completed and proved to be an invaluable help during the remainder of the project.

When the new scale drawing was completed, the members of the P.T.A. were invited to see the plans. The school paper carried the invitation.

PTA MEETS

Mr. Davis suggested that the members of the PTA visit Mrs. Carr's room to see the mural of the plan for planting around the building to be done by the seventh graders.

One morning a committee of children who were working outside requested that the teacher come out to help them for a few minutes. This had frequently occurred, so the teacher went to them immediately.

Before long, one member of the class came out and excitedly told the teacher that the pupils inside were misbehaving and that a fight was taking place. When the teacher entered the classroom, the physical aspect of the fight had subsided and the participants were arguing vociferously and blaming each other for the damage which had been caused to the eight large sheets of the class diary. Since there was no storage space in the room, the completed pages were kept behind a bookcase. During the fracas, someone had been pushed against the bookcase. The charts had fallen out and within seconds were torn and trampled. Realization of the damage interrupted the physical aspect of the fight. The teacher surveyed the situation and asked the pupils to tidy up the damage and to finish the work which had been left for them to do. Since the damaged work belonged to the entire class, the teacher suggested that before discussing the situation any further they wait until the committee outside finished its work and returned to the room. The period ended before the class could discuss it as a group, so it was necessary to table until Monday any action on this matter.

On Monday morning, the diary account of Friday's events was read. Just as soon as this report was accepted, the pupils launched into a discussion of what they thought should be done regarding the damage caused by the five participants in the fight. The class president led the discussion, and the secretary listed the suggestions on the board. The teacher sat with the class. The suggestions were as follows:

The teacher should keep the five people in after school for two weeks.

They should write (500 times), "I should behave and do my work when the teacher leaves the room."

They should purchase new material and re-do the work which they destroyed. This should be done on their own free time outside of class.

They should write an essay on "Good Behavior."

The five people should be sent to the principal to be punished.

After much discussion, in which the teacher participated as a member of the class, it was agreed almost unanimously that the punishment for the five students should be to replace the

Deferring judgment on an emotionally charged situation opens the way for a positive solution.

Alternative actions are considered prior to reaching a decision in a crisis.

work which they had damaged. One of the participants heaved a sigh of relief and observed, "Whew! I'm glad that's over. I worried about this all week-end!" The teacher asked the other four if they had also worried and whether they thought the decision was just. They, too, agreed that the solution was a fair one.

One morning, Dave, who lived out of town, brought in a trumpet vine and a package of Iceland poppy seeds. At first, the children were enthusiastic about planting the trumpet vine, but the teacher raised the question of whether such vines are easily cared for. Dave thought the vine would be all right since many of them grew where he lived. An animated discussion ensued. Some children insisted that trumpet vines were a nuisance; others persisted that the plants were attractive and did not grow wild. At this point, Ralph offered to look up the information in an encyclopedia of gardening which had been borrowed from the State Library Extension Service. The reference stated in no uncertain terms that the trumpet vine grows very easily and in many areas is a nuisance because it runs wild and is exceedingly difficult to control once it gets started. The decision to destroy this plant was unanimous. The pupils did decide to plant the Iceland poppies, and Dave selected a committee to help him.

Authorities
are consulted
when
differences of
opinion arise.

Just as they were ready to table any other outdoor work until spring, Betty brought in a clipping from a Sunday newspaper. It was an advertisement from a firm of Dutch bulb growers. The growers had perfected anemones and Iceland orchids which would grow and bloom during January and February. For \$3.98 it was possible to buy 100 bulbs. The core classes were enthusiastic about ordering some of these winter-blooming flowers. In order to effect an immediate purchase, they agreed to borrow from the materials fund. In addition, each child agreed to contribute five cents toward the purchase.

The bulbs failed to arrive promptly. The children expressed concern over the delay. Fortunately a check had been mailed and the address was written on the reverse side of the check stub, so the class requested the secretary to write a letter to the organization. A letter was brought in the following morn-

ing. The teacher would not permit it to go out in the morning mail, however, because "bulbs" had been spelled "b-l-u-b-s". Unexpectedly, this delay proved to be a fortunate one. Before the corrected copy had been mailed that afternoon, the package arrived.

Meeting disappointments is a challenge to problem solving.

At the end of six weeks the pupils culminated their unit on "Improving the Appearance of Our Campus." Then they used their past experiences as a springboard for a new unit of study. Even though they had changed to another topic, the students still continued to manifest interest in the beauty of their campus. Some of the planning for spring includes:

Inviting the upper-grade classes as well as groups from the nearby public school and parochial school to join the seventh graders in an Arbor Day observance. Possibly they too would want to plant some things in observance of Arbor Day.

Placing stronger protective fencing around the plantings.

Developing a better understanding of the task among people of the community.

This report, then, portrays a six-weeks' unit of work in the seventh-grade core. Never-to-be-forgotten are the students' satisfactions at making an important contribution to the development of their school. Long-remembered will be the appreciations gained by these students—their enjoyment of plants and flowers, their admiration for beauty in nature and their desire for conservation. These boys and girls have learned through practical experience some highly desirable and significant lessons in living—cooperation, mutual respect, sharing of responsibility, self-discipline and self-direction. They have acquired knowledges and skills necessary for capable, conscientious and responsible citizenship. Having devoted part of their time to an extended and enriched reading program, they have learned to value books as sources of information and enjoyment. In addition, they have gained a greater recognition of the importance of the language arts and have received definite instruction and practice in writing, listening, speaking and observing. Above all, they have developed a sense of continuing responsibility toward school and community betterment.

Evaluation is a continuous process.



INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER V

This is the story of a teacher striving to meet the challenge of a difficult situation—a two-hour class of slow-learning girls in a school characterized by rigid requirements and a poor physical environment. It is also the story of a teacher in process of transition from a formal pattern of instruction to a more flexible approach that makes possible a concern for meeting the personal-social needs of adolescent girls. The account consists of excerpts from the teacher's diary covering a period of slightly more than half a year. Significant features of the diary are the teacher's efforts to evaluate her own practices and the willingness with which she admits her mistakes. The improvement in social and personal adjustment and in language skills achieved by the class becomes apparent as the diary progresses and is best summarized in the words of the girls themselves near the close of the story.

A Slow-Learning Group in a Large City Senior High School

THIS account tells of the growth of a teacher and her class of twenty-eight girls in a large city public high school. This high school has three thousand students. The noise of the elevated, which runs past one side of the building, is often so nerve-racking that no one teacher is given classes on that side of the building for more than half the day. As a result, no teacher has a room of his own.

The administration has established some rather rigid rules and regulations. For example, in each subject field on a designated day each week written work is required during class time. During the semester each group is expected also to master certain lists of common facts. Furthermore, students in the school are arbitrarily grouped according to ability; that is, the best students are put in the honor group, and the poorest are assigned to the general course. Neither the students nor their parents have a choice in this matter. Assignment to classes is made from junior high school records of tests and achievement.

It is within this rigid framework that the teacher describes her work with her class. Hers is not an ideal situation, but neither is it a static one. Her growth and that of her students are apparent in her diary of the semester's work.

This experiment with a double-period class of slow learners was an outgrowth of a faculty group study. For many years the high school staff had studied and examined current practices and problems. In the fall semester of the school year 1949-50, a group of teachers from various subject fields worked together to study the assumptions which they had always held about slow learners. Some of these assumptions were:

Their attention span is short.

They cannot learn to express themselves effectively.

They are maladjusted.

They come from foreign homes.

These are typical comments commonly heard in the school.

The teachers held weekly meetings on time provided in the school day to consider the students and to study what was happening to them. They compared the responses of the slow learners to those of the honor students on several measuring devices, including a personality test, a vocational interest test, and the Character Card Record of the school. In addition, the teachers compared the reactions of both groups to various projective materials which were used as English theme work.

The chairman of this group was the teacher who, during the following semester, 1950-51, carried out the experimentation which is reported here. While studying the slow learner, the teacher had developed certain insights and a desire to work in the manner shown in her diary account.

This diary was developed as a means of communicating with a staff member of a nearby university who was supervising an analysis of general classes in this school. The purpose of his study was to improve the educational program for the general students, and his role was much the same as that of a supervisor in the usual school setting.

The diary is too long to include in its entirety; only those parts which tend to show growth on the part of the teacher and class are included. This is the actual diary which the teacher wrote; the style has not been altered. Her failures as well as her successes are reported. The impact of the teacher's own words carries the meaning.

The Teacher's Diary

Wednesday, September 14

Before meeting the group, I had heard something about it from the homeroom teacher. She had told me, "They think it's all right to spell 'Florence' without a capital letter. And they don't know the first thing about conducting an election, or frankly, *what* it's all about. But they're not fresh—not yet, anyway. Most of them come from West End School—not too desirable a neighborhood."

I found the students typical of an entering class—almost hysterical with the excitement and confusion of a first full day in high school. Evidently many of them had not been able

to visit the lavatory and were physically uncomfortable as well as exhausted by the seventh period when they arrived in my room.

After tension had been relaxed a little, the double-period arrangement was explained as a laboratory. "We hope to do so many interesting things this term that one period simply wouldn't be long enough for them—trips, plays, programs, and so on," I told them. After I had introduced myself very informally, ten girls were given an opportunity to tell the class something about themselves and their interests.

In the second half of the session, we took an orientation trip through the building, covering only a limited area and providing opportunity for additional trips to the lavatory. We met the sponsor of the G.O. (government organization) in the office, bought some program card protectors, admired the juke box. We visited the emergency room and were introduced to the nurse. She very kindly explained the use of G.O. funds for the emergency room.

I hope the general disorganization and lack of self-discipline conspicuous in this group are only the result of overstimulation and fatigue incidental to a new situation.

Thursday, September 15

Today we completed introductions, so that each girl had a brief opportunity to speak informally to the group.

A discussion of G.O. membership revealed need for better understanding of the organization and its functions. It was decided that the best person to give us this information was the G.O. president. Clara, a member of the class, was elected (through regular election procedure, incidentally, though the group's homeroom teacher had mentioned to me that it needed training in this respect) to invite the G.O. president to visit our room. The wording and tone of the request were discussed and rehearsed briefly. Clara returned from the mission, not with an engagement *arranged* but with the president herself. The rest of the period was spent in explanation of the G.O. Full opportunity was taken for asking questions.

Friday, September 16

It was obvious from the improved self-discipline of the

Opportunity
for getting
acquainted
adds to
pupil-teacher
rapport.

pupils as they entered the room that they had begun to adjust to the new situation. It was still necessary, however, to call them to attention when they did not respond to the bell for the beginning of the period.

After an oral review of the previous day's activity, we discussed what impression the G.O. president had made on the class. One girl asked the question: "What do you suppose she has learned in the four years she has been in high school?" This interested the students, and several comments followed. Looking back on the situation, however, I think I failed to capitalize fully on the possibilities of this event. The opportunity might have been used to ask whether the group would be interested in making a survey of the senior class to discover what the girls themselves thought they had gotten out of high school. I must be on the lookout for another opening. Such a survey, growing out of the pupils' expressed needs, should lead to interesting and worth-while experiences and contacts for these entering students. With students whose interest span is short, it is particularly important to "strike while the iron is hot."

A teacher must be alert to opportunities missed and watch for other openings.

Perhaps one reason why I failed to make the most of the opportunity described above is that I had my sights set on an objective—the teaching of the personal letter. Since no one had suggested it in the discussion of the student president's visit, I asked whether the class did not think it would be nice to write a note of thanks to the G.O. president for having given up a period to be with us on the previous day. The class politely, though not enthusiastically, agreed.

Writing experiences are more effective when there is a desire to communicate.

The rest of the session was spent in learning the friendly letter form and in drafting the body of the note. Content, as well as vocabulary and sentence structure, seemed above average for a third-term slow-learning group.

Completion of the letter on real note paper was required for Monday in order that the class could begin establishing standards of production.

Monday, September 19

The period began with a check of the letters written to the student president. General appearance of the letters (center-

ing, penmanship, neatness, matching of envelopes, etc.) was discussed.

The class was then invited to write a paragraph. My purpose in this assignment was to gain a further idea of how well the girls could write. This time we put special emphasis on neatness. The following lead paragraphs were used to stimulate reaction:

Ginny sank wearily down into her seat in the English room. It had been such a week! She was glad it was almost over. Just one more period, and she would have a whole week end in which to recover.

Now she was too tired and depressed even to talk to the girls before the bell rang. She just wished the day would end—*fast*. High school, she thought, was a little different from what she had expected.

From this I hoped to learn something about the adjustment of this entering group to the new high school situation.

Results on the projective level were rather disappointing. The girls' chief complaints concerned the size of the building, the crowded conditions in halls and lunchroom, and the general confusion. Almost every paper ended with the statement that Ginny would finally "get used to it." Many papers referred also to the prospect of being able to join clubs.

Analysis of the papers revealed one significant detail: six girls out of the group of twenty-eight failed to write more than a single sentence in the fifteen minutes given after the suggested initial lead was copied from the board. During the work period, every girl had seemed actively occupied. This is a matter which may need investigation and correction. I suspect that a longer period should have been allowed for completion of the work by these slow-working girls.

The rest of the class session was spent in the election of a class president. The group seems to have developed considerable interest and skill in this procedure. The speech-making in behalf of the three candidates was not only enthusiastic, but quite intelligent.

Tuesday, September 20

The class met in Room 238 to see a motion picture on how to improve reading. Because of the regulations of our school,

Assessing the inadequacies of pupils aids planning for subsequent learning.

we had to attend. There was no way for me to prepare myself and my class. This movie had little relation to anything being done in the classroom, and so it had only a very limited value at this point. A slight unity of experience arose, however, quite accidentally due to the fact that our class happened to be having its library lesson at the present time. Also, we had planned to make a reading survey today. Still, this motion picture lesson had a little of the quality of being thrown together quite by chance. Nothing at this point seemed to be hanging together. The situation was uncomfortable for me and must indeed be confusing to the group.

After seeing the motion picture, the group answered an anonymous questionnaire.

Wednesday, September 21

The library provides a setting for further analysis of pupil needs.

We spent the major part of today's session in the library, where the librarian briefed the class on the organization, the facilities and the regulations of the library. Girls made out library cards and had an opportunity to look for books, read magazines, etc. A check at the end of the session showed that eleven girls withdrew books; eleven others looked only at books; seven, only at magazines; and six, at both books and magazines. During the browsing time I circulated among the girls, helping them select books, asking magazine readers if they would like to take out a book, etc. Their comments were:

I have two books out from the public library.

I haven't time to read—I have to do homework and mind the kids.

I don't like to read books.

I have a lot of books at home I don't read.

When the group returned to the classroom ten minutes before the end of the session, I read the opening parts of *Seventeenth Summer* and *Sue Barton, Student Nurse*, with slight introductory comment for each. Two girls who had not withdrawn books ("couldn't find a book I liked") were given these on my personal loan.

Thursday, September 22

Today I offered for loan several more copies of *Seventeenth Summer* and *Sue Barton, Student Nurse*. Interest was not

nearly as high as it had been the day before. It looks as though, in this group, wide reading will be stimulated only by the constant offering of special books and immediately available facilities for attractive reading. In an attempt to develop the "library habit" and to emphasize responsibility, I sent to the library all the girls who borrowed my books in order that their loan could be entered on their personal library cards.

A brief but interested discussion on the library followed. The girls are learning to stand up and contribute opinions and ideas without raising their hands or waiting for an invitation.

The group decided to set up a committee which would work with the librarian to resolve the problem of getting some magazines into the classroom. I now asked the girls if we ought not to write the librarian a note of thanks for the invitation to use the library the previous day. There was no real interest in this, but nevertheless, another committee was organized to draft the letter of thanks. Still another committee developed from my suggestion that this might be the time to work up a list of titles the class would very much like to recommend for inclusion in a possible class library. It was interesting to note that Gertrude, the girl who had said, "I

The teacher is aware of the difference between real interest and compliance with a request.



The teacher
is not defeated
by difficulties
in arranging a
learning
environment.

don't like to read books," now volunteered to be chairman.

To set up a classroom library, we would have to overcome many difficult circumstances. It is not customary to have a classroom library in this school, and teachers move from room to room rather than stay in the same room for the full day. Such an arrangement has discouraged many of my colleagues from using the room itself as a part of the learning environment. We are going to place our books and magazines in a locked cupboard. A three-by-four bulletin board was the only place for display of book jackets. Therefore, I have made a portable bulletin board which I take with me to class.

Most of the session was spent happily working on these committee problems. The class was obviously relieved to be involved in a definite, planned activity.

By the end of the session, the committee chairmen had an opportunity to present a summary on their groups' progress. The entire class joined in discussion and criticism of the working method, the plan of group operation submitted, etc. Every committee announced that it would be ready to report the following day.

Friday, September 23

At the end of the second week, I feel that I still know this group very inadequately. There seem to be submerged problems which are holding up real progress. The group does not hang together. Nothing has yet happened to give very much point to the school experiences of these girls. I will have to devise more challenging activities.

The most noteworthy event today was the girls' decision to have a party. They agreed that each girl should write me a letter telling about her wishes in this connection.

Tuesday, September 27

Drill is
introduced
when need for
it is apparent
to pupils.

A ten-minute practice period in using the word "their" opened today's session. This drill seemed needed because of a common error revealed in the pupils' letters. To overcome her own mistakes, each girl invented ten interesting and varied sentences using "their" correctly. This slow-learning group enjoys the definiteness of an assignment or of classroom activity of this kind. A definite activity has the advantage of

getting the period under way quickly and of settling the group. Also it provides opportunity for variation in drill techniques—use of boards, use of paper, oral recitation, etc. In ten minutes every girl can be involved.

The letters describing individual hopes for the party were returned and commented upon. Opportunity was given for correction of errors and for the sharing of letters with neighbors.

The session concluded with an animated and somewhat noisy discussion of the projected party. The big problem here was whether or not to include *boys*. These girls have no self-consciousness about admitting to an urgent desire to *meet* boys. Here is no brook gently winding down to meet the river. When I indicated the possibility of more than one party during the term, one of the students suggested that this first attempt should be a "hen" party. This idea was quickly accepted when Edna pointed out that it would be embarrassing for them "if the party flops and there are boys there. We should practice first." Only Clara was disgruntled. Then the class president, Elaine, expressed annoyance with her for not understanding there would be other parties. She should, Elaine stated, have patience.

A permissive classroom atmosphere helps the teacher understand actuating impulses.



Wednesday, September 28

Copies of an English practice book were distributed and receipts were made out, while I checked neatness and accuracy. These books are to be left at home, I explained, until an assignment is made for their use. At the moment, my purpose is *to give out a book*. It would not do for this class to be without books when everyone else is getting one this week. Besides, maybe we will use the practice book as we face technical problems which are sure to come up.

I exhibited a dozen new books and explained that these are part of the classroom library we are setting up. I also explained the Friday free-reading period, and invited the girls to think about what book, magazine, etc., they would like to bring to class for Friday's reading period. Four or five girls offered to bring in books for the class collection.

The rest of the session was spent on developing an efficient plan for the party. After a very active discussion for and against various candidates, a mistress of ceremonies was elected. Comment was highly intelligent, and one girl's remark that so-and-so "looks" like a nice girl was picked up and dismissed scornfully by a classmate. The latter might develop into an intelligent voter. Necessary arrangements were discussed, and we decided a messenger should be sent immediately to inquire about our use of the corrective gym for this party. We discussed the form, tone and wording of the request; rehearsed it; and dispatched the messenger. She returned and reported that she had met with success. The room was available to us on Friday, October 7. Committee members were not selected, but a list of committees to handle necessary details was drawn up.

Thursday, September 29

The session began with a brief drill reviewing the spelling of "their" and "there," "embarrassing," "high school," etc., which had been noted the previous day.

During the session, committees worked on plans for the party. Interest was high; planning was uneven, but progressing.

Friday, September 30

A conference with the counselors of general students led to



a decision that briefing on the general course might be helpful at this point. Several in the group had expressed rather bitter dissatisfaction about their placement in the general course. One of the counselors spent an entire period discussing the matter with the class. The pupils were quite receptive. Their questions showed a clear need for this kind of orientation, and they warmly appreciated the counselor's presentation and manner.

When the grade adviser had left, the class president spontaneously moved to extend her an invitation to attend the class party. This motion was unanimously accepted despite yesterday's tense decision not to invite anyone outside the class. The class seems to be achieving social sensitivity.

Clarification of school policy results in better student morale.

Sunday, October 9

Everything at the party went so smoothly that it was unbelievable that this could have been planned and executed by the same group. There was no agitation of the sort we had lived through during the planning.

A certain restraint was evident—a very conscious attempt to be lady-like—to the point where *food* (the major concern

during planning) was politely refused when second helpings were offered.

Monday, October 10

A discussion about the success of the party on Friday confirmed my opinion that everyone had had a good time.

We discussed the fact that ten planning sessions had been given over to the party. Then I asked, "What do you think you learned from the experience of planning a party? Was it really worth all the time we spent on it?" Discussion was slow, although a number of girls pointed out that they had had a chance to learn about *giving* a party. I changed the question, asking, "Do you think we will have as much difficulty planning our second activity as we did this first one?" The answer was a unanimous "No!"

"What was wrong with our planning at the beginning?" I asked further. Discussion on this point was lively:

We had called out; we had gotten excited; some of the girls couldn't keep to the point; a few weren't cooperative; some of them had ideas of their own; some didn't have any ideas at all, etc., etc.

Evaluation by
pupils
recognizes
achievement.

We summarized by discussing the question, "What did our planning experience teach us?" I feel that this enterprise has helped the girls achieve a "we-feeling" and develop a much more positive attitude.

The class began the taking of a personality inventory. This test, unfortunately, was interrupted by a fire drill and will have to be completed tomorrow. This particular test was introduced as an experience in taking an inventory of one's own reactions to people and situations. From this, it was explained, every girl would be able to draw up a personality chart which would tell her something about herself.

Tuesday, October 11

The class completed the taking of the personality test begun yesterday. The students could hardly wait to get to this. They seemed greatly interested in discovering the nature of their own personalities.

At the end of the period, I told the class about two girls, both ill at home, who were continuing their studies under home instructors. I said that I had heard that these home-

bound students missed the companionship of other girls, and the fun of doing things with other people. A brief discussion followed concerning this situation. Did the girls feel that this association with other people was an important part of schooling? As if this were my own bright idea (and not something actually suggested to me by the director of the school social service project), I invited the pupils to consider whether they would like to "adopt" one or two such girls—to write them letters, perhaps to visit them, etc. When the group expressed enthusiastic interest, I said I would look into the possibilities and would report to them later on.

New activities are motivated through an unusual human resource.

Thursday, October 13

The period began with preparation for the presentation of news items selected at home. This was the first time this term everyone had come to class with assignments already prepared.

Reports were excellent. Almost every girl showed evidence of developing poise. Audience attitude and reactions were also more commendable than they have been in the past. For the first time, this group did not act like a huge litter of kittens trying to crawl out of a box.

The second half of the session was spent in free reading. Every girl was free to read a book or a magazine she had brought or to borrow one from the new classroom library. Three girls spent the period contentedly reading the comic books they had brought. Six girls withdrew books from our classroom library. Minerva insisted on going to the school library for a special book I had recently suggested—*Cheaper by the Dozen*.

Guided individual reading may reveal interests and attitudes of students.

What should be done about the comic book readers? These girls were deep in the type of comic book which is a modern version of the old true confessions magazine, though it gives more emphasis to the teen-age angle. Themes deal with career choices, adjustment problems, boy-girl relationships, as well as with adult problems. I am still groping for some way to help these girls substitute more desirable reading even though it may be along lines similar to those in the comic books. I have asked the librarian to assist me on this problem.

Friday, October 14

Results of the personality tests, from which profiles had now been made, were returned to the group. I suggested that each girl focus attention on the low points, all the while reminding the pupils that this "fortune reading" could not always be taken for gospel truth. These findings were just interesting results for them to think about. The significance of the twelve areas of the test was not gone into; the label was very sketchily explained, and it was pointed out several times that "of course it's normal to fall short of perfection, especially for boys and girls at this age and in a new school."

To get each girl to think about her own situation, I had tried to enter a brief question on each profile sheet. Such questions as these were used: "Do you really like the girls in this class, Barbara?" "Are your feelings very easily hurt, Gertrude?" "Are you moody sometimes?" They were derived not so much from the teacher's study of the profiles as from her personal observation and knowledge of the student. Immediate reaction showed that I had in the great majority of cases "hit something"—even though the questions were very general and based on common human experience.

The girls were not so much interested in the profile, which they did not really understand, or in the questions, which were casual—"something for us to think about"—as they were in the particular test questions to which they had reacted most strongly *when they had taken the test*. What the group wanted to do most was to discuss personal problems immediately. I now know that I missed the boat at this point. This was, as a supervisor pointed out to me later, a "teachable moment," a moment to leap in and to start swimming.

Reluctant to have this good propulsive material dissipate itself in talk at the moment, I asked the girls if they would like to write a letter in class on Monday describing some problem (their own, or a friend's) which they would like us to discuss very fully. Although it was obvious the girls saw no reason to postpone an interesting activity, they politely consented to this postponement.

During a five-minute break which followed, girls chatted to friends. As much of the conversation as I overheard re-

Questions about
personal
problems need
immediate
attention.

ferred to the test and to personal situations girls intended to bring up later for discussion.

The rest of this session was spent in free reading. During this period I visited with individual girls and talked about the books they had read or were reading. The comics seem to be just one kind of reading for them, not necessarily exclusive of other kinds. Whether comics should continue to be read in English classes is another question. I have not yet decided to forbid them in the free-reading period, lest this destroy a rapport that now seems to be forming gradually. I have decided, however, to supply a wide variety of magazines in addition to the books already available, and to do more of the selected reading which stimulates the borrowing and reading of books.

Monday, October 17

During the first half of the period, the girls worked on the letters which had been agreed upon in the previous meeting's discussion of the personality test. Instructions were limited to one point: "Suggest, in as much detail as you think necessary, some problem you'd like us to discuss. It may be your own problem or a friend's."

In their letters, most of the girls chose to tell about their own problems. Expression seemed free and sincere. "Problems" included a wide variety of real situations to which girls felt adjustment had to be made. One girl had no problem and had no friends who had problems either. Two girls had had vague, general problems in the past, but everything seemed to be fine for them now. Another girl wished she knew how to begin a conversation. Another hoped we would be able to talk about meeting places for young people and maybe do something about getting such a place organized. Another girl had a jealous neighbor who annoyed her by getting her own daughter a new dress every time she got one. Two girls thought they themselves were too sensitive. One of them supposed that her sensitiveness was an indication of an "inferiority complex"; the other knew it was the size of her bosom and what other girls were saying about her sweaters and blouses. Three girls stated they had difficulty with the younger members of their families: Clara with a little sister

Discussion of
real situations
leads to free
and sincere
expression.

who is a pest, Stella with a sister she really loves, and Mary with a brother-in-law whom she detests. Four girls were concerned about their admitted tendency to daydream. Six girls had conflicts with parents. One thought that they were too strict and perhaps too rough, but she loves them; three girls found their parents difficult for various acute, but usual reasons; two had fathers who did not understand their need to "get out" more frequently. Most of these papers showed an interesting ambivalence in feelings. The most revealing and also the longest letter was written by Eloise. She had been my most serious truancy problem up until the time the class had begun to plan for our party. It is encouraging to realize that now the class is assisting Eloise in making her adjustment to the severe emotional conflicts which exist in her home.

A curriculum
which uses
students' own
problems has
vitality.

The largest group of problems centered around boy-girl relationships, with emphasis on dating. The age by which a girl ought to be free to date was a big concern here. The four girls who mentioned this subject did not identify it as a parent-child problem, which it actually is, but as a dating problem. The same is true of Betty, who was concerned with the question of a reasonable hour to get home. The one real girl-boy problem was fictitious, right out of the comics or a movie.

Also placed on the agenda for today was a discussion of what we might do for our adopted sisters. The usual agitation characterized our free discussion. Quite frequently this had to be interrupted so we could "remember" what we had learned from our previous planning experiences. The discussion revealed that:

1. Some ten girls were highly critical of the suggestion that we buy a book for our protégés because, they conjectured, the girls "might not like to read."

2. Eight girls thought it unwise to give our old comic books to either of the girls because "her mother probably wouldn't like it." Discussion revealed the fact that many mothers do not permit their daughters to read comics. The idea seems to be that, if a daughter isn't doing her homework and has time to read a trashy comic book, she might be helping around the house instead.

A suggestion that we could begin collecting comic books and get the permission of the girls' mothers before we gave them the presents was made by one student.



Tuesday, October 18

A brief dictation, very formally administered, began the period. It still seems to me something of this kind is helpful in getting the period under way calmly.

The question of what to do about Jane came up first on the agenda. Jane, it was claimed, is inconsiderate. Yesterday the whole class had to wait ten minutes for dismissal from the homeroom because Jane failed to report with the others at the end of the day. Jane, who looked quite gratified throughout this whole indictment, promised to do better. In fact, she promised to try not to be late again in the morning. Her tardiness then, she explained, is really what makes her rush off in the afternoon: she has to get to detention. The group was quite cynical about Jane's promise to improve.

This is the first instance of real group action so far. Feeling that it marked a milestone, I complimented the girls on the way they had approached this problem. The reaction to this commendation was most interesting. The entire class was pleased with itself—rather smugly so, in fact, as if this was no more than it deserved. I don't remember ever having had a more interesting group. After the problem of Jane had been

The class achieves group action through dealing with its problems.

settled, the comic books which had been brought for our adopted sisters were collected.

After the break, I suggested that girls with similar problems (indicated in the letters) work together at finding solutions. Perhaps, too, they might want to present a program to the class about their solution. The class was eager at last to get down to a discussion of the problems. Groups were formed to accommodate all the various areas of interest and need revealed. Three girls with no particularized area of interest were permitted to select a group that had a problem which *might* interest them.

Successful
group
experiences
are contingent
upon teacher
guidance and
instructional
resources.

The rest of the session was spent in discussing with the groups just what problems they would like to present to the whole class. I had visited within the groups and noted that several of these seemed to be making progress in focusing the topics in which they were interested.

From here on in, everything depends on how much guidance I can give and upon what materials and other resources I can make available to the girls. It is very important that this first experience in group planning be successful for these girls—successful, that is, from their own point of view!

Wednesday, October 19

The session began with the preparation of answer sheets for the vocabulary test to be administered tomorrow. This provided the girls with an exercise in following directions, something they have been doing rather badly. After the break, the agenda for the day was drawn up and the following business was considered:

Letters to the class from Mary and Valerie, our adopted sisters, were read. These expressed interest in the proposed association with our class. Their comments were very flattering indeed.

Continued discussion of project problems was requested for the purpose of deciding what kind of information each girl will need to look up. Progress here is somewhat doubtful at this point, because I know that what the girls really want is a chance to discuss again their particular individual problems. Perhaps it might be wiser to yield to this pressure and work around later to an organized investigation of solutions.

At present, I am working out a guide for group activity, which may be helpful in giving the over-all procedure. This

guide will offer suggestions for research and for planning activities, as well as indicate desirable attitudes which may be cultivated within the group. Ideally, it could be produced by a group of students who had lived through the planning experience and had profited from it. Such an activity at this stage of their experience in group participation is probably impossible in this class.

Friday, October 21

The first half of the session was spent in correcting the vocabulary test taken the previous day. This had been a test required by the English department. Concentration in general was excellent, but the correction job proved too much for several girls who could not manage it except with difficulty. Gertrude finally gave it up without even trying. The whole activity was pretty bleak.

Then I distributed to each girl a copy of the planning-suggestions letter on which I had been working. The following excerpts illustrate the seven or eight suggestions included in the letter:

Select your permanent chairman carefully. She has to have all the characteristics we've talked about. But remember it is not her job to tell you *what to do*, or *what to do next*. That is really something for you all to discuss together and agree on.

Be sure to collect *a lot of information* on your special topic. Just your personal opinion on a subject isn't enough. Your audience will also want facts, because they hope to learn something they didn't know before. They are going to be very interested in what you have to tell them.

Every day during your planning period, you must make sure all the other girls in the group are making progress. If some girl is having trouble, you could all discuss whatever her problem seems to be and so help her solve it. If even one girl in your group is unhappy or unsuccessful, it's really everybody's business, isn't it?

These suggestions were discussed. The girls were then asked to file the letter for future reference and use during their planning sessions. Next time, in preparing a similar letter, I shall ask the group to list the suggestions in terms of *questions* which they might ask themselves as they go along.

The entire group now went to the library, as had been arranged previously with the librarian, to get books helpful in

Pupils reject tasks that are beyond their level of achievement.

solving research problems. The girls have apparently talked themselves out on their personal problems, and are now interested in doing some research on the general problems which seem to be emerging. They appeared very active during the library period, but a check the following day showed that only five girls had actually withdrawn books. Five books on personality problems were available, but nobody seemed to need any of these. I am quite painfully aware that I now have only a very vague idea as to exactly what is happening in each group.

Monday, October 24

Writing to a
real person
results in growth
in written
expression.

The first part of the two-period meeting was devoted to the regular department-scheduled written exercise. The day's composition was a letter to one of our home-bound sisters. The girls seem to take a very keen pleasure in the correspondence with these two home-confined students to whose happiness they want very sincerely to contribute. The level of written English is good for this slow group, and almost every letter shows an effort to write with the "reader in mind."

Thursday, October 27

I had time to visit all groups briefly and discovered that all are still in the "talking" stage. Except for Eloise's group, all seemed to be discussing legitimate committee business. Eloise, who is chairman of a three-member group, had conspicuous difficulty in holding her group together, not to mention getting it to function. Her group and I have made an appointment, at which time we can discuss ways of improving the committee's performance.

Monday, October 31

Under
sympathetic
teacher
guidance
classmates
react
constructively
to a student's
personal
problem.

The most interesting "business" which developed resulted through a request by Olga that her problem be discussed. Olga, who has in the past had several fits of inexplicable giggling, rose with great dignity to ask the class if it thought she had improved in her "conduct." Three girls assured her she had—in this class, they added pointedly. From various references made, it appeared that Olga was going a little too far in the record-keeping class—she was, in fact, "embarrass-

ing" the man teacher there. The attitude of the group was not as savagely critical as, in the teacher's previous experience of this sort of "confessional request," it might have been.

Wednesday, November 2

After the period-break, a scheduled news broadcast exercise was presented. This exercise is worth while. As in other sessions of this type during the term, its aim is to stimulate the reading of newspapers and to provide drill in speaking clearly and interestingly before a group. The procedure involves:

Selecting and clipping a news item of value and interest to the group

Summarizing facts in one's own words (orally)

Stating one's opinion on the situation or activity reported on.

The class is broken up into groups of four; each group has ten minutes to prepare the broadcast, which is very simple in form, giving only a framework within which each girl may present her item. The audience comments briefly at the conclusion of each broadcast.

This activity is somewhat unrelated to the other varied concerns of this lively group. However, the exercise has proved so popular with the girls I believe its occasional use is warranted. I am looking forward to the time when choice of news items can be focused upon pertinent topics, such as "how people solve their problems" or "how people spend their leisure time." In fact, I have been bringing in occasional news items to show how people solve their problems. It is my hope that shortly material of this kind will be brought in by the class.

Friday, November 4

The period began enthusiastically with the reading of letters received from the group's "adopted" sisters. The delight of these girls in receiving real letters is revealing. Evidently very few of them have ever received any mail at all.

The reporter assigned to cover our "sister" story in the *Log* appeared just as a brief practice session on usage was being concluded. She read her report and asked the group to check it for accuracy, meaning, etc. This contact with an upper-termmer who is doing her job so conscientiously is very good

Success in
current
undertakings
leads to
broader
interests.

for these girls. A request came from one member of the group for an opportunity to see the *Log* office in action some time. A sub-committee was established to arrange details for such a study trip.

The second half of the session began with a report by committee chairmen on the progress of their various groups. Only the committee on dating, of which Lydia is chairman, seems to be working effectively at the present time. This group's survey idea has now been picked up by the group on day-dreams. Personality difficulties in the group on sister-brother relationships account for its lack of progress, but the interview technique they have now adopted may just possibly work out.

The teacher's
self-evaluation
leads to
improved
teaching.

I have been re-evaluating my failure to give adequate guidance in the carrying out of these projects. Are we expecting too much? Reports of this kind require rather specialized skills and abilities. The student engaged in a project leading to a report must know how and where to find material; she must be able to understand the material she finds; she must digest it; she must organize it in some form harmonious with the plans of her committee-mates; she must present it in such a way that it will be interesting and valuable to the larger group (audience). So far I have not given any practice aimed at developing these skills or abilities. Rather, I have hoped that these would develop out of the student's own need to master them. Some guidance is possible when a teacher joins a group or when the group reports on progress to the whole class. But would it not be more effective if the teacher could arrange for some preliminary practice? "Now here are the things we must be able to do if we are to present a report." I would very much like to know how this sort of thing is done elsewhere. Can we really assume that if a girl is interested in a topic, she will automatically be able to understand what she reads on it, be able to organize pertinent facts and be capable of presenting the material to the group?

Would a carefully planned unit carrying through a single project for all groups be a good initial step? Last year at the annex, our committee activity at the beginning had centered around a common interest—the trips we were taking. There

had been opportunity then for better guidance through the difficulties we might and did meet. I still feel that as a teacher my function must be more direct. I must teach a skill before I can expect to develop it. I know that a group may learn a great deal from its failure to do a good job, but I suspect that, with these girls, a failure (such a public one, too!) makes them reluctant to try again. How else can I explain the fact that, while they are enthusiastic about the *idea* of group planning, they are also very glad after the unit is over to let the teacher carry on? No, I am not discouraged. I just think there must be a better way to help these girls carry through.

Thursday, November 10

The period began with a formal drill using a news item in which a person is described as solving a problem. This drill has proved very interesting as a written exercise as well as a point of departure for guidance. I read the item and then place key names and words on the board. The class is asked to state (using complete sentences for each) the answers to the following questions:

What was this boy's problem?

How did he solve his problem?

What is your opinion of the way this boy solved his problem?

Students get practice in analyzing steps in problem solving.

The aims of this sort of drill include the following:

Developing interest in the content of newspapers by showing that daily items reflect our own problems and concerns

Providing training in focusing thought through answering specific questions (difference between fact and opinion)

Motivating discussion on the problem or concern which sparks the action described in the item.

Wednesday, November 16

The big formal activity of the day was the listing of questions which had "occurred" to us and which our trip to the airport on Monday might serve to answer. This excursion has been forced on the class by faculty decision. The brief references to it before this day have been deleted. The questions suggested show that not one girl has any kind of interest in the miracle—or the mechanics—of flight, or in the history of aviation. Not one is interested even in how much a trip to any

place in the world might cost or how long it might take. Although I might have planted some suggestions here and there (and might advisably have done so from the point of view of effective motivation), I had decided against this because I hoped that the trip to the airport would normally stimulate such interests. If the trip did arouse such interest, the girls could ask questions at the airport or write for information later.

Activities
meaningless
to students may
result in apathy
and inertia.

During this discussion of questions, Barbara brought about a revealing situation. She got up to say she didn't see why we should bother with this listing. If a girl had a question, let her ask it when she got to the airport and not bother everybody else with her problem. Barbara's attitude, of course, highlighted my own failure to make the activity meaningful. But my aim now was to get individuals to focus on questions and to work out the statement of them in terms clear enough so that our guides might be able to answer them. However, as Barbara's objection showed, my own aim was not a valid one. Worse, I had assumed that the girls already *had questions for which they wanted answers*. This was certainly not true of many of the girls in the group.

However, when I asked the class whether this listing was



worth while and whether the procedure should continue, almost everyone voted in favor of continuing the activity. I don't interpret this as a case of the hen's eyes being focused on the chalk line. I suspect that students in general find it hard to deny teachers their way once they know what the teacher wants. We therefore decided that it might be advisable for each girl to think about some interesting question she would like answered and be prepared to state it in class the following day. A letter to the teacher was decided on as a simple way of meeting this nonurgent necessity.

It was a relief to get on with the day's assigned research report on how to get to the airport from school. Shirley showed originality in her source of information. Instead of asking a policeman on the street, she had phoned the police department. The class enjoyed her report of her telephone adventure and thought it would be nice to invite the lieutenant to meet their teacher.

Thursday, November 17

The business of listing questions, begun inauspiciously yesterday, continued during the first half of the session. Now that every girl had a question, the stating and the listing of these progressed smoothly, with everyone, including Barbara, happy.

The group which had visited Mary presented its report. The whole group showed a very warm response to this "adopted" sister. This activity had not been formalized in any way. Relatively little time had been spent on planning; yet it promised to be one of the most successful of the term. In a simple and natural way, every girl in the class was involved in making Mary happy, and every girl derived value from the contact with her and from the experience of making a new friend. In this friendship, Georgina, who played duets with Mary, found some recognition within the group. Up until now she had seemed somewhat retiring.

Marjorie and Edna are not fitting into the groups which they joined. Edna discovered a real interest in acne and commented that, "this doesn't fit in with what my group wants to do." I decided not to try to fit Marjorie or Edna into any group's framework.

When genuine interests are tapped, the group is responsive.

Wednesday, November 30

The session began with presentation of the first of the committee reports. The theme, "Getting Along with Mothers," was presented within a radio program framework. The material was thinly developed and derived exclusively from the girls' own difficulties. There was no evidence of the reading which I knew had definitely been done in preparing for this presentation.

Teacher
standards must
be consistent
with pupil
potentialities.

The reporting committee showed complete control and poise. Two of its members were usually very unstable and disorganized individuals. Class reaction during the presentation was excellent, for every girl gave her complete attention to the rather insignificant problems involved. I was very much interested to see that Shirley's was the only real problem presented, the other two girls having outlined fictitious problems.

Even though I realized that the value of an activity often cannot be measured by the quality of its actual presentation, these results of six weeks' preparation under guidance as conscientious as I was capable of giving were most disappointing.

At the conclusion of the report I requested that the four members of the committee write me a letter telling what things might have made their report more worth-while for the group.

Thursday, December 1

The committee on dating presented its report. It had worked up a twenty-item questionnaire on dating. This had been filled in by members of five classes: two third-term, one fourth-term and two fifth-term groups at a nearby boys' school. The handling of the figures was conscientious and intelligent. The presentation was an explanation of a pictograph, the idea for which had been suggested by the supervisor on one of her visits to the group. The presentation was a little halting and indicated that the group had fallen down in rehearsing the actual presentation. But except for this, the committee of four clearly showed excellent cooperation and worth-while activity.

The only significant development during the discussion concerned the question of how to break off a faded "going-steady" relationship. Two girls described themselves as physi-



cally fearful of what would happen if they "broke off" with boys who had threatened their safety. On this point I refrained from offering "guidance" but deliberately turned the discussion to a consideration of the advisability of "going steady" at age fifteen or sixteen. I also promised to read the class a pertinent story the following day.

Friday, December 2

Continuing the effort at guidance on problems which had come up yesterday, I began the planned reading of selected short stories on dating and on boy-girl relationships. Though I would have liked to begin with "It's Tough To Be Young," this story was not immediately available. So I had to settle for "Sixteen." The class loved this story but was disappointed in its ending just as most classes seem to be.

By arrangement with the librarian, I had brought in from the library a large collection of attractive teen-age stories from which I read brief excerpts. Though the group was very much interested in the readings, only two girls borrowed books. In thinking the matter over I realized that I had not been allowing them enough time to examine and sign out

Personal concerns of pupils become the basis for understanding more universal problems.

books. When a portion of the class period was used for this purpose the results were better.

The session concluded with a presentation of the report on daydreaming. The reporting committee included Minerva, Olga and Theresa, who was chairman. The program began with the telling of three original stories about girls who daydreamed. In none of these was it quite clear what was intended as dream-detail and what as action, but apparently no one in the audience failed to understand the story. Then there was the presentation of a skit, the aim of which was to prove that daydreaming does not pay—at least not in school, where it interferes with one's work. A very interesting part of this skit gave Olga an opportunity to toe dance around the room in her ballet slippers. In each corner of the room she was met and embraced by a "hero" who then stepped aside to let her go on.

Last on this group's well-planned program was a very brief report of its questionnaire activity, and a committee-led discussion of daydreaming in general.

January 20, 1951

Since this is the end of the term, I asked the girls to write me a letter telling of any ways in which they believed they had grown during the term and about which they thought I should know. Here are two of the responses:

The criterion
of achievement
is growth in
desirable
behavior
characteristics.

I hated to go to school. . . . Sometimes I would go in late just to delay time. . . . Since September there was not a day that I stayed out unless I had to. I have come to school early every morning. I have grown to like school very much. I learned how to bring in things on time. I used to be afraid to talk. Now I have learned to talk and not to stutter and not to talk as fast as I used to. I have enjoyed reading books and making book reports.

I have learned how to spell a little better, to read a lot better, to talk clearer, and I have learned that I am just like any girl. I find if I wait for someone else to tell me what to do, it won't be the same as if I had done it myself without anyone telling me to do it. I also found out that if I want to say something, it wouldn't be fair if I don't get up and say what I think is right. Before, I thought that whatever I did and said didn't count at all. . . . All the girls would be looking at me. . . . I was afraid that when I would get up they would talk about me behind my back, but in



this school it's different. If someone told me that I was going to improve and I would stand up in front of a class and talk and read good, I would have told them they were crazy. I learned what I want to be, to talk to a person, to make friends. When someone says something to me, I know how to answer.

January 23

This semester the administration has arranged the schedule to enable me to work more closely with the art teacher in providing worth-while English and craft experiences for the same group of students. I am scheduled with this general class during the third period; during the fourth period they go to the art class. The third-period art class meets with me during the fourth period. Since our classrooms are directly across the hall from each other, the two groups can function almost as a single class, in relation to the work at hand.

February 10

The two groups were asked to express a reaction to an unfinished story based upon a situation familiar to all teenagers. While the girls in the art room painted their reactions in non-verbal terms (color and shape), the group in the English room described theirs verbally. During the following period, the groups were reversed. The group that had painted, now wrote; while the group which had previously written, painted. Expression of their verbal reactions was much freer and more fully developed than any they had previously given. It seems to me that reactions in non-verbal form are as helpful in projective situations as are verbal expressions. This activity was important and helpful not only in relieving tensions but in giving me insight into the problems and concerns of these girls.

It was thrilling to see that the girls enjoyed the activity both in art and in verbal expression. One girl who was in the first painting group requested permission to come into the other group to talk about her painting which was still wet. It was interesting that she wanted to develop verbally and immediately the meaning of her painting: "This dark part is Claire (the fictitious character in the problem story). It's dark because she's unhappy going through the halls of her school. Here (the blue part) she's going home," etc.

March 6

Another project undertaken by this class was the making of puppets. Since the art budget sufficed only for regular art activities, there was no material for use in this group. Hence, we canvassed the shops for discarded materials which had been used for display purposes or window designing. We were fortunate in locating beautiful materials of every sort.

Before the creation of puppets began in the art room, we recalled a variety of fairy tales and discussed their key characters—hero, heroine, villain, magician and comic character. A fairy tale invented by a high school girl and illustrated by a commercial publisher was brought in. After I had read it to the class, we discussed how we could develop and produce it as a puppet show. I claimed (quite without authority, prob-

Correlated
paintings and
written
expression give
insight into
personal
problems.

Teacher
initiative makes
possible the
procurement of
essential
materials
without cost.

ably) that the author had been so enchanted with the amusing character she had created that finally, his personality having become so real to her, she had just simply had to put him into a story.

Each girl was asked to think about the kind of story-character she would most like to bring to life in puppet form—hero, villain, etc. Committees met first in buzz sessions and then formally, in rotation, before the whole group to describe the choice made by each member. The whole group analyzed the choices made from the point of view of variety and balance. When the group was satisfied that a reasonable balance in characters existed, the actual creation of puppets was begun in the art room.

Large pieces of materials in a great variety of color and texture were hung around the room. From these fabrics, which the girls found very exciting and stimulating, each selected a color and texture, or a combination of colors and textures which suggested the character of her puppet. The group then broke up into the committees and met in the English room to discuss individual color and texture choices. Each girl's choice was discussed from the point of view of how the selection fitted into the color choices of her group. Necessary adjustments were then made within the committee to assure variety and balance. Following these group discussions, each committee presented to the total group a report on individual color and texture choices, explained the character each planned to develop and gave reasons for the particular choices it had made.

March 14

As the puppets neared completion, discussion of their emergent personalities began spontaneously. The distinctions between appearance, character and personality were discussed and illustrated by reference to various puppets. The sort of peculiarity which distinguishes one personality from another was identified through discussion of our own idiosyncrasies in speech, gesture, habit, etc. Good story names were invented as a puppet's personality became established. Many of the puppets also acquired a "past," which was helpful in understanding their present situation or appearance. Among ex-

**Puppetry
becomes a
projective and
therapeutic
device.**

amples are Bart's drunkenness as a result of a lost love; the Princess Clarissa's bitterness because of her failure to find a husband; the grandmother's irritability with children because they need so much attention.

Talk along these lines was informal and casual—a part of the general discussion of the activity—but culminated in the writing of individual personality profiles of the puppets. These were read aloud by their authors and studied—first, in a general way by the whole group; and then, more intensively within the committees—to see what clues for story development were offered by the various details brought out or suggested. Some of these personality profiles are quoted below to show the possibilities:

Mrs. Wanda Willing is a very unpleasing person. She is always screaming and fussing at her grandchildren. She doesn't like children but she has to mind them because she is the only person they have. Mrs. Wanda Willing said that children are too much trouble because they need so much attention.

Mrs. Wanda Willing is always saying "dad blame these old children; one of these days I am going to throw them out."

The following story was written by the girl who didn't finish her puppet. Up to now she had been very unresponsive. It seemed desirable, however, to encourage her to write about the puppet.

Descriptive
accounts of
puppets may
reveal
emotional
tensions.

My kind of puppet has a very rare character called, "I Don't Know." He is a lot of fun, but I don't know what he is like. I can't tell whether he's brave or a coward, handsome or utterly gruesome. But I am going to tell you how I wanted him to be. My puppet was going to be a gypsy—in fact, a man gypsy. He was going to be handsome—in fact, that was his most important part of the show. He was so handsome he attracted all the pretty girls. He was going to be very brave. He was going to have the reputation of having saved at least forty-four girls. But my puppet can't become any of these things because he just can't. He just doesn't exist. The reason is I didn't have the privilege to go and get my puppet like other girls. Also my puppet was going to be very kind and nice. He was going to be very different from some people whom I know. My puppet was going to be able to laugh when he wanted to in front of anybody if he wanted to. He wasn't going to be prejudiced. He was going to be equal with all people. He also wasn't going to pick on one person all

the time. If there is any resemblance of this story to people living or dead, this is purely coincidental. My puppet wasn't going to be sneaky, like—well—like people I know.

The pupils began making plans for a puppet show to which they wanted to invite another class and some of the school officials. They certainly were showing evidences of social maturity.



INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER VI

This story told by high school seniors describes their experiences in an American problems course in which they engaged in community projects. It indicates the potential for learning when students become involved in action programs in their community.

Community Service of High School Seniors

THIS story is an account of a group interview with a class of forty seniors who have spent a part of their year's study of American problems actually working in various agencies in the community in which their school is located. As nearly as possible, the actual words of the students have been used in telling the story. It is the record of a forty-five minute interview which had not been planned in advance but which represents the spontaneous reactions of the group. For this reason the account is neither as formal nor as complete as would have been the case had the story been prepared originally in written form.

Before the story begins, however, a description of the school community and of the preparation of the teachers for this kind of teaching is related by the teachers themselves.

Picture a high school in a neighborhood historically, geographically and culturally separated from the rest of a large city. Picture the pupils of such a high school, many of whom have never visited the main shopping district of the city and few of whom have ever seen the luxurious park-residential areas on the other side of town. Picture further these boys and girls as descendants of recent European immigrants and of World War II migrants from isolated sections of the southeastern states. Add to this a closely knit neighborhood pride and interesting traditions, such as painting scenes on the window screens of the homes, scrubbing the white steps of the house every morning and developing luxurious back yard gardens.

It was in the setting of this neighborhood that the social science teachers took part in an in-service education program guided by the curriculum department of the school system. In this program teachers studied the larger community through field trips, listening to speakers from various community agencies and exploring their own smaller school communities.

To some of these teachers the modern problems course given in the senior year seemed to offer a natural opportunity to put the ideas from this course into practice. Students had complained that they were always reading and talking about civic improvement but never doing much about it. Here was a chance to have pupils fulfill the major goals of the course as well as their strong adolescent desire to contribute to the improvement of society.

The Students' Story

Goals of individual pupils are related to their developmental needs.

All of us as seniors have to take American problems after our American history courses in the eleventh grade. We indicate whether we would like to join community service sections of the problems classes or the regular problems classes. We who chose the community experience found that we had done so for different reasons. Some of the boys said that they had to go into the army and thought it would give them a better picture of what they would be fighting for. Most of us took it because we thought it would give us a chance to meet people and go to different places where we would otherwise never go. Some of us chose it just because it seemed different—not the same old stall. We think the senior year is an ideal time for this kind of course because we have the background to help us understand what we come in contact with.

Perhaps we should tell you about our community. Our community has a lot of pride in itself and shows a lot of cooperation. There are white steps on houses all through the city, but ours are the whitest. There are neighborhood papers that tell about all kinds of activities. Before we began going out we didn't pay much attention to these papers, but now we read them every chance we get. A few years ago this section of town didn't even have a high school. There were enough people here for a school, but they had to go across town if they went on through school, and many of them couldn't afford it. Then they voted a new school, and now the school is helping in the community.

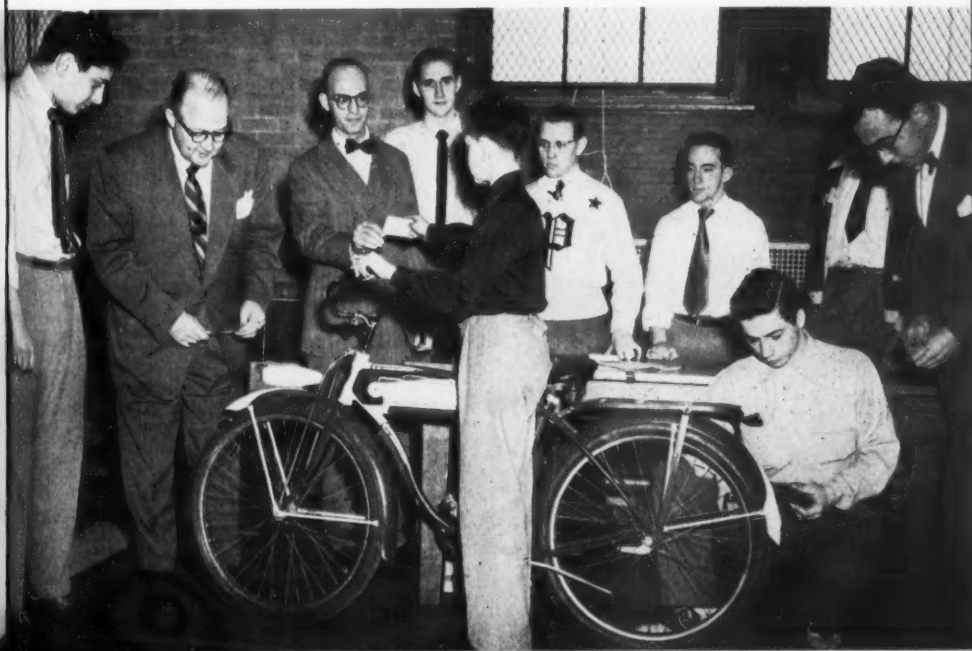
When we started out in the course, it was just like any other course for a couple of months. We followed a textbook, a regular course of study. We learned in detail about government, community services, health and things of that sort. We



had outlines and got a general background. Then, in October, our teacher began taking groups to visit different organizations in the city to learn about what they did and what they were trying to do in the community. We went to the library, the Safety Council, the Red Cross, the Community Council and several other agencies; and leaders of the various agencies came to school to talk with us. Not everyone could go to every one of the agencies, so we chose the two we wished to visit. We had an orientation to these agencies and their services for about two weeks, then chose which agency we wanted to work in for the rest of the year. We divided into committees according to our choice of agencies. In our class periods we continued to work on outlines and background, although, of course, we also discussed in our groups the things we were doing outside. Each committee prepared a report of its activities. The following are summaries of these reports.

Bicycle Safety. We chose to work on this problem because we thought it would give us a chance to meet leaders in different civic groups. When we first went to the Safety Council, we were introduced to all the kinds of safety activities which the agency carries on. Then we were told that our particular responsibility would be to instruct children how to ride bicy-

The teacher's goal is to build background and readiness for active participation.



cles safely. We taught children about bicycle safety and helped them set up a system for checking their bicycles. We set up booths in which different children were responsible for checking some one point in safety: tires, lights, each thing about the bicycle. We were there to supervise, but children did the checking. If the student passed the inspection, he got a card. At the end of the line a safety tape was put on his bicycle.

We liked working with the children, and liked the feeling that they really benefited from what we did. Now they know how to prepare bikes for inspection and they know how to prevent accidents. We showed the children how to set up a council. We showed films on bicycle safety and gave talks, too. We gained a lot of safety knowledge ourselves and had a chance to meet people from service clubs and other important organizations.

The Community Council. We chose to work for this organization because it gave us a chance to meet people and to find out more about the people who live around here. When we first went down to the Council, the director talked to us about the purpose of the organization and about what its members do. They sponsor dances, bazaars—everything to help



pull people in the community together. Right now they are sponsoring Little League baseball and they use high school people to keep score, referee and do all the things to help.

We worked on surveys which the Council was making. The first one was for Civil Defense. We had a chart with certain questions and each student was given a number of blocks to cover. Some people had never heard of Civil Defense and didn't know anything about it. We had to find out what they knew about it and whether they would be interested in taking part. We had learned at the Council that the whole city is putting everything behind this Civil Defense effort. Part of our job was to get people to know about it, but the main thing was to get them interested by letting them know that we were really interested. About Easter time we made a survey about chest X-rays. Here we had to get people interested by asking questions, by telling them how it has helped others, and by being interested in them and smiling to show that interest. Most people in our community are very cooperative, but a few slammed the doors on us.

Library. We chose to participate on the library committee because we like books. We thought that we would get to

Pupils become involved in community action programs.



Firsthand
experiences
lead to a
discovery of
problems.

stand behind the counter and hand out books, but we were surprised. It wasn't what we had expected at all. Before we went we had visited the Community Council and we knew about their surveys, but when we got to the library we did surveys the first thing. We went around the community finding out who went to the library, how often, what they liked to read and where they got the books other than library books which they read. We found that it is mostly children—not adults—who use the library in the neighborhood where we worked.

People didn't even know about the branch library. It wasn't publicized enough. It was interesting to find out why people didn't use it. The survey itself was a part of the advertising campaign to increase library services. Our presence in the neighborhood opened people's eyes. After we had completed the survey we gave out posters and special cards telling about library services. Each student had special places to go. We went to the Y.W.C.A. and to the seamen's Y.M.C.A. We gave out maps showing how to get to the library.

We asked the librarian to let us have a story-telling hour for the younger children. We thought it was a good idea, but somehow it didn't work out. We didn't get a chance to try it.¹

It was good experience for us, though. We learned how to approach people who really didn't want to be approached. We certainly found that we needed different languages in that neighborhood!

Red Cross. There were two groups of us at the Red Cross. One group worked at campaign headquarters for the Red Cross Drive. The other worked in health activities. The group of us that worked at campaign headquarters met a great many people from all over the city who had volunteered to help. We typed letters, addressed them and got them ready for mailing. We sent out circulars and posters. Toward the last of the campaign we helped handle the accounts that were sent in by the various collectors.

The health group made posters on nutrition to be put in places all over the city. That grew pretty monotonous—making the same poster over and over again. But we also had a

¹ Students working in a different library did have this opportunity.



chance to go out and help in the mental hospitals where they needed people to entertain the patients. When we first went to the hospital, most of us were afraid. We wondered why in the world we had gotten ourselves mixed up with crazy people. But when we got to the hospital, we found out that in many ways these people are just like anybody else. Our feelings of fear changed to feelings of compassion and even of friendship. We felt good about being able to bring smiles to the faces of the people in the hospital.

Housing Authority. We volunteered for the group on housing because our tour of slum clearance projects last semester had proved so interesting. We wanted to see how this program would relocate people in the new housing projects. We wanted to learn more about our own city. We were curious about how other people lived.

We took trips to the slums and to housing projects and learned about the work the Housing Authority is doing. We then found that our real job was to work as a branch of public relations. The problem is how to advertise and let people know about the work of the Authority and its services. We were taught about the relocation plans and regulations, which places are to be torn down, and how people are to be relocated.

Attitudes are changed through experiences with people who are different.





The group of us in the relocation office filled out insurance forms and worked on relocation maps of the houses already torn down and houses still to be acquired by the Authority. When people came in, we interviewed them and made out filing cards telling their income, racial stock, number in family, and whether or not they were boarders or owners.

Skills learned
in school
become
functional
through use.

Another group of us made a survey in different sections of the city. We circulated a questionnaire, tabulated it and added personal comments on the survey.

We learned a lot about how the Housing Authority is run, about the planning and problems of tearing down slums, building projects and making improvements in certain parts of the city. We got to know about all of the work necessary for the project. We were surprised to find that Negroes and whites worked together very well; but Negroes had to get information from Negroes, and whites got information from whites. We learned how to read maps.

People we met were interesting. Some people were glad to move out of slum homes; others were angry at being forced to move. We learned how to treat people differently. We had

a hard time in the poorer sections. People were more sociable in more highly educated areas.

Evaluation of the Project

From a student's paper the following observations are presented:

Finally, let me summarize how this course helps youth to make a better community. The mother who sees her boy off to high school well provided, as she believes, with all he needs—a good breakfast, adequate clothing, his lunch and ten cents—feels that she is sending him to a fine privilege. Actually, everything in him is itching to be up and doing, to be using his hands, his body and his energies.

For many boys and girls the years at high school represent nothing more than an endurance contest. They need to assure themselves that they are real people, that they belong, that they amount to something. And they need to prove themselves in the eyes of each other, to make a place for themselves in the esteem of their friends and their parents.

Youth needs the experience of working with adults as a way of learning how to live with adults in the daily situations and relationships of genuine work. He needs the opportunity to find out what his capacities are in the terms of the actual work that is being done in the world. The adolescent needs the opportunity to demonstrate his worth as a member of the working community, not merely as a clever performer of specialty stunts on the playing field or as a maker of exhibition pieces in formal contests. He needs the opportunity to produce and create in terms that the workaday world will recognize.

The civic participation course provides these opportunities; it is a stepping stone in preparation for acceptance as a solid citizen and member of the community.

The Housing Authority representative responded in the following manner:

The Housing Authority is well pleased with the arrangements and extremely gratified with the short term results concerning the civic participation course students from the George Washington High School. The benefits arrived at to date, it seems to me, stem largely from the fact that *the experiences the boys have here are real and not manufactured for their benefit.*

The work they have performed is useful. That in itself gives them the feeling of purposeful participation in a public service agency that can be transmitted in no other way.

Readiness for more mature interests serves as a springboard for adult activities.

Achievement in important community projects leads to effective learning.

The high degree of enthusiasm displayed by the boys in their current project here attests to the boys' attitude towards civic experience.

We are more than glad to cooperate in this learning-by-doing method. I feel that our employees gain a lot by the association, and the contributions made by the students to the Authority are not to be overlooked or underestimated either.

If the long-term results of the civic participation course are as fruitful as the immediate short-term results, the investment is a sound one from both our points of view.

The director of the Community Council sums up the values of this project with the following words:

In evaluating the project, it is significant that here is a participation type program which provides a valuable service in four directions: (a) to the student, (b) to the local residents, (c) to the city-wide Civil Defense program and (d) to the local Civil Defense organization.

It has had the effect of impressing upon the student the need for community interest and participation in volunteer programs; in giving the students an opportunity to visit homes and meet people who were strangers, in many cases, to their own mode of living; and it helps the students to overcome their natural reticence in this kind of activity. The students themselves have spoken of the program generally as quite satisfying, although their first impressions are hardly that.

The program has aroused interest in Civil Defense among the local residents. Certainly the 39 percent who answered negatively to the first question have now heard of Civil Defense. Others are assured that activity is taking place on the local level.

There are adults in the Council committee who believe that such a program helps in modifying attitudes toward young people by residents who have been interviewed when they see that the students are interested in the community. The ethnic structure of the community, particularly as it applies to nationality background, is such that this phase alone represents an important one to the Community Council. The city-wide Civil Defense Director has stated by letter that it is a valuable experiment and, in the near future, the results will be passed on to other local district coordinators. Certainly the mediums most successful as shown by the survey should receive more emphasis, and an effort made to strengthen the value and use of the other mediums.

PART II

**The Learning Environment Is
a Product of Many Forces**

People Are Important

PREVIOUS chapters have described many good learning environments. Some illustrate a wealth of teacher skills and techniques; others stress sensitivity to human personality; and still others highlight the possibilities of children's continuous growth. Several give evidence that, even with few materials, resources in the community can be mobilized to create a rich school environment. This chapter has a special focus. It presents certain problems which must be faced if teachers are to bring about a good environment for learning.

Learning is a
product of many
inter-
relationships.

Learning is a product of many interrelationships; children and schools exist within a social setting. Although a teacher may create a beautiful physical environment and bring understanding and skills to the classroom, the children's learning is conditioned as much, or more, by the world outside the four walls of the classroom as by that within. Society exerts an invisible but powerful influence which determines the response of children to learning and affects the quality of life within the school. Social realities come to school with the children, the teacher, the administrator and the supervisor. The values, pressures and conflicts of the culture become incorporated within the personalities of people and influence their daily reactions and decisions.

As teachers, administrators or supervisors become aware of their personal orientation and are sensitive to the values and cultural pressures which shape their decisions, they are able to work intelligently within the framework of social realities.

The teacher's social background and his personal history constitute the framework out of which he looks at the world and selects and arranges experiences for children. His daily decisions are influenced also by his out-of-school life—the emotional satisfactions which he finds in relationships with his colleagues, in his family life, and in his adjustment to universal human problems.

Four other forces affect the quality of learning that goes on in the classroom: (a) children, (b) parents, (c) the institutional nature of the school and (d) the community.

What the teacher does is conditioned by the children in his room and by his relationships with them. Children's out-of-school life and their attitudes acquired at home may be barriers to constructive communication between teacher and student. When teachers understand the importance of peer relationships to children, they can use these relationships as potent forces in learning. In any consideration of school learning, therefore, teachers are central because they make many crucial decisions that either block or help to realize the potentialities of children.

The goals and aspirations of parents also influence teachers' activities. The school program that provides for frequent and constructive communication between parents and teachers is most likely to create a good learning environment for children. The school as an institution both supports and limits the teachers' activities. Teachers and administrators who work cooperatively as a group often can reduce the number of restricting routines. The influence of the community reaches into every school activity. The organized life of the community, its values and its lines of prestige are reflected in the school and in teachers' attitudes toward children.

In coping with these forces the teacher assumes many roles. He is a technician who arranges materials, plans schedules and uses a variety of methods in working with groups. He is a social engineer—one who joins with his teammates in selecting out of the cultural heritage those ideas which are of greatest value to transmit to the young. He is an artist who is sensitive to human feelings and able to evoke creativity in others.

To the children, the teacher may be many different people. Some children may see him as a powerful friend and protector, a support in time of need. To others he may appear as an obstacle to work around carefully, or even as an enemy who interferes with the child's own drives and satisfactions.

In planning the environment for learning, the teacher can work on a surface level, teaching a few skills and some conventional information, and yet not reach the real level on

A teacher's decisions may hinder or help a child in developing his potentialities.

Potentially the teacher is a technician, an artist and a social engineer.

which children live. Or he can strive for a level that is deeply satisfying to children because it enables them to come to grips with their most vital developmental tasks. The teacher who works on the surface may seem to be safest with his community. He meets conventional expectations without disturbing others by questioning accepted practices. The teacher who succeeds in a significant program, however, is more secure with his children, himself and eventually with parents because he creates wholesome changes in children as he guides growth.

In making such choices the teacher is torn by the problems of meeting the children's needs, of breaking with obsolete school patterns and yet of reassuring parents and the public. He needs sensitivity, insights and skills in working with many people. Because of his unique personal history, each teacher copes with the key social forces in his own way. There will be as many ways as there are teachers. Although teachers may exchange some tools and ideas with one another, or together create new ones, each will use them somewhat differently.

The same insights and sensitivities are also needed by supervisors and curriculum consultants who contribute to the good learning environment. Helping teachers to face and work with social realities is a central function of supervision. After exploring from the viewpoint of the teacher some illustrative problems of teachers' lives, their relationships with children, the goals of parents, the school as an institution, and community expectations, this chapter ends with some implications for supervision and curriculum development.

Helping
teachers face
social realities
is a supervisory
function.

The Teacher as a Person

The teacher is a concatenation of many forces. These forces impinge especially on the beginning teacher, who must make many readjustments.

Mary Lou Monroe is a new teacher. She has just heard the words: "Now, boys and girls, I want you to meet your new teacher, Miss Monroe." She is alone with her first class, her first day, her first moment. What kind of teacher will she be? Mary Lou is just touching adulthood, not quite certain that she really is old enough to be a teacher. She is, however, no *tabula rasa* upon which the outlines of "school ma'am" are to be drawn. She has had a unique and a complex history; she has learned and unlearned many

things; she has had perceptions sharpened or distorted. The sum of these experiences, wholly personal, will emerge in one way or another in her teaching.

An autobiography of Mary Lou tells a typical story. Born in a rural center, she came from a small, middle-class family who migrated to a larger community. Moving again with her family, Mary Lou spent her high school years in the suburban fringes of a great city. The family is not too poor, not very wealthy, but moderate in living standards. The Monroes are intermittent churchgoers and participate in modest social activities. Like most of her colleagues, Mary Lou comes to teaching knowing well only one segment of the varied American culture.

Some teachers are second generation Americans whose parents remember the trauma of being uprooted, of adapting to new ways of living in a startling and demanding new culture. These parents provide quite a different view of life from that held by Mary Lou and her family. Even more different in cultural background are those teachers who emerged from the Harlems, East Sides, or south of market districts of some great city, where race, religious or ethnic consciousness, or painful poverty provide potent motivation to get out and get up.

In Mary Lou's first classroom she may be surprised to find that among the thirty youngsters there are only ten or so who have much in common with her own background. How does Mary Lou react to those children whose families are so different from her own? Her background does not necessarily prejudice her against the children of different backgrounds, but it might well leave her ignorant of and at a loss to understand these differences.

If Mary Lou were in a school with many children of foreign descent, she would probably recognize the problem of differences in home atmosphere. She might, with help, gain insight into the unique problems and needs these children bring to school. It may be more difficult for her, however, to recognize other children who represent a culture that differs just as vastly but more subtly from her own. Will she ever be let in, invited in, made welcome by these other children?

Other beginning teachers have problems of another sort.

Joe Groff's father was a skilled, conscientious and successful steelworker. He saved for his two children and, with their part-

The differing cultural backgrounds of teachers condition their understanding of children.

time jobs to help, was able to send both boys to college. Joe majored in education because he felt that teaching offered the most attractive promise for initial employment. He was personable and quick. The city college where he took his training and the city elementary school in which he did his student teaching were familiar parts of his own background. In fact, the school where he did his student teaching was the same he had attended as a child. Joe was given an excellent recommendation by his instructors and supervisors and was offered several assignments at the end of the spring term. He finally chose the Valley school system, an exclusive suburb of a major metropolitan area about ninety miles away. People congratulated Joe on his good fortune. He himself was pleased because he liked the new modern building, the quiet streets, the elegant shops and the spacious homes.

Alas, all was not smooth sailing for Joe. His easy poise was marred by previously unnoticed mannerisms of speech; his dress was informal, revealing the informality of inexpensive fabrics. Joe felt ill at ease in the elegant shops, and he was never invited into the spacious homes. The children mimicked his city speech, and he had trouble with discipline. Joe was an unhappy teacher.

The difference in cultural worlds is a fact of life. Each person develops sensitivity to the nuances of his own familiar world; yet this world is only a small piece of a complicated, cosmopolitan nation. With the vast shifting of populations, Mary Lou and Joe are going to find themselves in classrooms with all kinds of children. Their own childhood experiences will not enable them to understand the standards, values and goals of all these children's families. To communicate accurately with children and parents from all kinds of backgrounds, teachers must have a variety of social contacts. They need to understand that their own families' ways are one expression of a complex culture, not a measure against which others are judged.

Teachers are children grown up. They may have learned to fear a father, to be dependent on an older sister, to feel intense and bitter jealousy of a younger brother or to cherish the memory of an indulgent grandmother. The quality of these interpersonal relationships may persist far into maturity and may influence other relationships.

The teacher who has grown up in a home in which a strict father made the decisions and gave all the answers may accept or reject his father's influence. Relationships to all other au-

Teachers need varied contacts in order to understand our complex culture.

thority figures, particularly male, may be affected for many years. A woman principal may be fiercely resented; direction by an autocratic male principal may be welcomed; or illogical hostilities may be expressed toward a supervisor possessing the familiar tone or manner of the father. As a child another teacher may have been displaced by a new baby in the family. This teacher may later find it difficult to give warm affection to a roomful of "kid sisters and brothers."

The personal history of every teacher includes some emotional problems derived from early family relationships. A few individuals may have been marked by a traumatic experience more extreme than the emotional hazards of normal family life. Other teachers may bear the imprint of drab and uneventful years which have left them emotionally impoverished and which have denied them affectionate warmth. Unless such teachers develop the objectivity and insight which will enable them to assimilate these problems, some distortion of feeling—some displacement of emotion—will occur in their later dealings with people.

Happy and rewarding relationships in teachers' lives are just as potent. Teachers who have had a wide circle of supporting relatives and friends have learned to give and receive love freely and generously. When they, as children, have been championed by supporting parents, guided by tolerant older brothers and sisters, comforted by fond grandparents and cousins, and have shared the family circle with friends, teachers are more capable of reacting warmly to children.

The relationship of the teacher and the student is crucial in learning, and the importance of the teacher's attitude cannot be exaggerated. His feelings about the learner, about parents or about his fellow teachers are interwoven with his feelings about himself. What he sees to praise and encourage or to condemn and punish will be influenced, not simply by what is objectively there, but by what he projects from his own values, his own needs, his own past experiences. All of his own conflicts, his anxieties, his readiness for various classroom experiences, his compulsions as to what must or must not be done become a part of this interpersonal relationship. More than manipulation of the environment and methods of studying

Understanding his own personal history helps the teacher avoid distortion in his relationships.

The teacher's feelings about others are interwoven with feelings about himself.



children—or the use of newer methods of teaching—is required. No amount of manipulation of the external will touch upon the internal drives of the teacher unless he is willing to examine himself. He must struggle to understand himself if he is to understand students and to function in a wise, constructive and sympathetic way. The study of children or the tryout of new materials or new methods, therefore, is of value when it assists the teacher to re-examine himself and his own drives and compulsions. Through such re-examination he rebuilds and improves his own adjustment so that he can improve his relationships with others.

Relationships
with colleagues
influence
teaching
success.

A school faculty is a peer group with its own “stars,” “fringers” and “isolates.” Because teachers spend so much time with children and young people, peer relationships with their colleagues take on increased importance. Acceptance or rejection in the lunchroom or the teachers’ room may set the emotional tone of the day. Every human being needs to feel he belongs and has status in a group of peers and that he is able to win recognition and response from them.

Because of the pattern of prestige in the faculty group, some teachers’ opinions will “count” and those of others will not.

Prestige relationships may prevent free discussion in teacher groups. Friendship circles and social groups within a faculty exert an influence. In considering the expectations and relationships of the members of a faculty, administrators and supervisors study these pattern of prestige and social acceptance to ease the strains within the faculty. A study of one faculty revealed that there were stratifications, which a new teacher must understand. The oldest teachers influenced the attitudes and decisions in faculty meetings. A group of bridge clubs determined the acceptability of new teachers. Lack of social interchange among the men and women on the faculty was not broken by such slight informality as use of first names. A program of experimentation, which began to break down some status lines, received vigorous and aggressive opposition. Although couched in professional terms, this opposition was directly traceable to the challenge of status positions. The wise supervisor or administrator, and indeed the wise faculty group itself, will be aware of any social grouping which interferes with communication within the faculty and will strive to build common experiences.

In some schools the new teacher may have to find the leader in the faculty and follow the standards approved by those "who count." The following is illustrative of this phenomenon:

Miss Mills carried her lunch tray into the teachers' lunchroom and plumped it down at the head of the table. Elizabeth Mills is a leader of her faculty, not because she is an outstanding teacher, but rather because she is the sister of the local judge and, unlike most teachers, is a social leader in the town. She knows all the important people. She is a witty, decisive person with a gently sharp tongue. The principal always consults her first on faculty problems.

"Betty," Miss Mills said as she emptied her tray, "did I hear your children rehearsing another play?"

"Yes!" Betty Riley answered eagerly. "They're writing a play about Coast Guard air rescues to illustrate how the airplane has changed our ways of living. They have some wonderful ideas!"

"Haven't you given three plays already this year?" Grace Lane asked.

"You know, Miss Riley," Elizabeth Mills observed drily, "all this activity on your part is hard on the rest of us. Why don't

Studying patterns of faculty inter-relationships helps the administrator to understand his staff.

you relax a bit? They've noticed your work in the office downtown."

Betty Riley's colleagues are reminding her that she is out of line. If she wishes to be "in" with the faculty, she must conform to the faculty mores. In the school where Elizabeth Mills holds sway, this means moderation of activity—not too much, not too little—in field trips, plays and other projects.

In other schools the administrator studies the peer relationships of his staff just as a skilled teacher does those of children. Because they have developed group feeling, faculty members are sensitive to one another and alert to the needs of newcomers. The entire staff will help to induct new personalities into their already well-knit group. In such a school new people do not threaten the security of the faculty because the teachers have learned that each may win his place through creative contribution.

What expectations does the teacher bring to school? Does he feel that he must be the best teacher in the building? Does he feel that he is responsible for having his students meet a rigid standard? Does he feel that his students must show a higher score on standard tests than those of other teachers? Such expectations put both the teacher and the students under pressure. This sense of competition with other teachers or the fear of their disapproval does not make for increased self-insight. It creates, rather, a sense of guilt and blame about failures or an unhealthy smugness about success. Such expectations need examination in groups which include supervisors and administrators as well as teachers.

Although some faculties develop an inclusive group feeling, many young, recently prepared teachers who enter an already established school face difficulties. In a culture such as ours, conformity to the group is a major emphasis. The idealism and determination of the young teacher often are shattered whenever other staff members take cynical attitudes toward innovation. Only the rare person can withstand the continued disapproval and criticism of his peers. Wanting to be liked and accepted by the other teachers, the new teacher unconsciously begins to modify his teaching so that he is not too far out of line with others. A nonstatistical "regression toward the mean" in teaching methods takes place. The peer group is a

Staff members
need to
understand
each others'
expectations
and motivations.

large part of the teacher's social world and his status in it is of prime importance to him. If teachers are to do their best in a society where conformity to group expectations is so important, their best must be recognized and accepted. Supervisors often play an important role in establishing a constructive group climate and in helping teachers withstand criticism when professional convictions are at stake.

Helping to improve staff group climate is a supervisory function.

The teacher's life span on the job is worth scrutiny. Induction into the profession often requires adjustments reaching deeply into the teacher's personality. Many teachers find the realities of school work quite different from the conditions they had anticipated. They find they must develop new satisfactions as they change some of their goals and aspirations. The effect of the teacher's social background and family history, as well as the impact of peer relationships with colleagues, are thrown into strong relief during the first years of teaching.

During the active professional years the major developmental tasks of finding emotional satisfactions, often through marriage and family responsibilities, are met. Teachers as a group face peculiar difficulties as they strive to reconcile their personal needs for emotional satisfactions with the demands of their profession. The insistent demands of work with children often create unique problems for the teacher long in service. Because achievements are less tangible, teachers nearing retirement often need special consideration and reassurance.

Teachers face the developmental task of finding emotional satisfactions.

The first years of teaching are critical ones in the teacher's professional and personal life. Mary Lou Monroe starts her teaching career with the energy, enthusiasm, naïveté and inexperience of the young. She has both the handicaps and resources of the beginner. Full of new theories and half-learned skills, she is unsure of herself, yet certain of some things so recently learned. She must adjust to an institution that has been going on for many generations. Even in a new school, with paint fresh on the walls, the other teachers bring experience and convey traditions, ways of doing things, and attitudes towards children.

When Nancy Smith took her first job she was both terrified and exalted. She had been looking forward for four years to

teaching, ever since high school, when she had really decided to become a teacher. She felt fortunate to be placed in a city system. Most of her friends had gone to isolated schools because the larger systems wanted experienced people. She was assigned to a combined junior-senior high school housed in an old and overcrowded building. During the first hectic days Nancy hardly had time to meet many of the faculty. Those she did meet were kindly, although a bit patronizing. The advice she received most often was, "You have a couple of classes that shouldn't have been given to a new teacher. But anyway, don't smile the first month. Be tough. Then you won't have much trouble." Nancy noticed that the other teachers were older than she. At lunch she was startled to notice that the men and women ate in separate groups. One rather cynical teacher to whom Nancy expressed her surprise remarked, "Well, they are all married anyway."

Their induction
into the
profession
influences
attitudes of new
teachers.

Many schools have learned that the new teacher is indeed a special sort of person. Needing and welcoming help, the teacher is influenced in his behavior and in his attitudes for many years to come by the quality of his induction into the school system. New teachers have been helped over the first hurdles by explanations of school routines, of methods of obtaining supplies, of forms for booking audio-visual materials. But what has been explained about the culture of the school—its traditions and expectations?



Several adjustments in attitude and behavior must be made by new teachers. Mary Lou, for instance, may have to explore many of her own emotions as she meets the crises and emergencies of the daily classroom. She did not realize that a sassy smile could make her so deeply angry. Why? Did children's impudence stir up forgotten incidents and make her feel guilty about her own mixed attitudes toward her parents? Or did she need to be sure of having the upper hand with children? She had never before been uneasy about talking to a stranger, but this was Bruce's mother, and Bruce was so difficult. Was Bruce, and through him, his mother, a threat to her own adequacy as a teacher and as a person? Such searching questions may deeply shake the teacher's self-confidence. Some personalities become defensive and avoid self-knowledge, yet others through such questioning develop new maturities and insights. The first years often set a pattern of rigidity or flexibility of personality which may continue throughout the teacher's professional career.

The first professional years may develop a rigid or flexible personality pattern.

Mary Lou and her colleagues face other developmental tasks as they mature emotionally and make the decisions which will affect the pattern of their lives. Mary Lou is a young woman and hopes to get married, the sooner the better. A good portion of her heart and her head are absorbed as she seeks among possible mates one to love and marry. No wonder she comes to school some days not yet wakened from a beautiful dream; and other days she is anxious and nervous as she awaits a phone call.

Phyllis Salten was the smartest girl in her class. She did the best student teaching; she was quick, efficient and such fun, and her eyes had a charming sparkle. Phyllis was pretty and had lots of boy friends, or so it seemed. But she was *too* good. She could beat almost any man in tennis, could outswim others easily, and her diving form was perfect. And she was feminine, too. On the farm she had learned to bake and can and preserve with old-fashioned excellence. "I'm just too good!" she wailed to her friends. And she was! She couldn't help being competitive in her personal relations; and each man who had found her charming and attractive soon felt defeated and somehow a little dull in her presence. Phyllis did not get married.

What happens to Phyllis as the years go by and as she re-

mains unmarried? A girl like Phyllis often helps to support aged parents, often shares their home. When they finally die, she is adrift and alone. It is not an easy task for a woman in our society to accept the role of an unmarried person. The role of unmarried school teacher is made more difficult by the stereotyping which is still frequently expressed in cartoons, radio and popular literature.

The emotional
drives of
teachers
influence their
attitudes
toward children.

The deep and genuine liking for children that draws many young women into teaching also makes marriage desirable to them. If marriage is not attained, feelings of insufficiency, incompleteness, and sometimes envy and cynicism may develop. Or unmarried teachers may smother children with possessive affection which interferes with their wholesome independence. Some unmarried teachers find the parents of children in their classes personally disturbing. The tendency to blame parents for the problems of their children may derive, in part, from the denied parenthood that is felt but not acknowledged by some of the Phyllises in the profession.

John Johnston, too, faces developmental tasks peculiar to a male in the teaching profession. John may find himself apologizing to his wife and friends if he remains in an elementary school as a classroom teacher and makes no overt move to become an administrator. He may be pitied because his associates predominantly are women or because his building principal is a woman. He may, however, prefer teaching and not want an administrative post. Yet the culture tends to be critical of a man who is satisfied to remain as a teacher when his superior is a woman and when most of his peers and colleagues are women.

John is expected also to establish and provide for his family in suitable circumstances. He is often compared with other young men in the community who have more remunerative occupations. At times, in order to meet these expectations and to satisfy his financial obligations, he takes on other work in addition to his profession. In some communities a rather patronizing attitude toward men who are teachers, plus the modest financial returns, discourage many men from entering or remaining in the profession.

Both men and women teachers face emotional adjustments

as they attempt to maintain satisfying family life while meeting the demands of their profession. The community sometimes supports and sometimes criticizes adversely the teacher's efforts to participate normally in the life around him.

Mary Lou, like other teachers, will face different but demanding problems forty years from now as she approaches the end of her active life and retirement becomes a reality. She might at that time recall an early conversation with the principal of the suburban school where she had started teaching. As the principal explained the salary schedule, he had said, "Although the retirement deduction may seem high, you are lucky to start so young with us; you'll have a good income when you retire." She had laughed to herself—big joke! Retirement was as remote as the moon. Now retirement was nearly upon her and things were different. Her doctor had given her a careful check because of some pains that, although not new, seemed more than usually persistent. "You'll be able to retire pretty soon, won't you?" he had asked casually. The full reality that she was ready to consider retirement, that she must decide what she would do and how she would live, struck her with cold force.

During the last years of professional life, the numerous problems of aging also become teacher problems. In a population where everyone is living longer, teachers too are living on and remaining until the time for retirement. What does it feel like to be aging? The demands of students are the same, their voices as shrill, and their energy as inexhaustible, but the teacher is different. Some older teachers are not as resilient as in their youth and have more aches and pains. Can we expect the same classroom behavior and the same professional contribution from the older teacher? There are elder teachers who continue to respond with interest to new curricular suggestions and to show the same eager experimental attitude when another study group is proposed. But there are others who say, "I can't stand on my feet all day and have energy left over to study new ways of stimulating dramatic play." These teachers, too, need understanding and help.

Teachers who have not adequately met some of the developmental tasks imposed by the passing years may have a grow-

Teachers face developmental tasks as they grow older.

Teachers who maintain curiosity and enthusiasm grow in insight and wisdom.

ing sense of defeat and failure as their period of service comes to a close. But for every such teacher there are many teachers who have been able to maintain their zest and enthusiasm as they grew in insight and wisdom.

The consultant from the university was chairman of a work session at a teachers' institute. He was to summarize the panel presentation, "Creative Writing—How Can We Stimulate It?"—and he was feeling somewhat bewildered. Many rich ideas were being presented; he was absorbed by the contagious enthusiasm in the panel members and nearly forgot that he had to pull it all together. He was impressed not only by the ideas but by the people who were presenting them. The panel members were no newcomers to the profession; they were not young people on their way up. The youngest panel member was in his mid-forties; and one woman, whose soft voice was no measure of the power of her personality, looked to be well into her sixties. Here, thought the university visitor, is evidence of the real quality of our profession. Here are teachers who have grown up with their jobs, and for whom each year has added new dimensions of competence. And these were his first remarks when he got up to summarize.

Competencies gained through years of service should have administrative recognition.

Age in itself is not the problem; what is done with it sometimes produces personal and educational tragedies. Older members of faculties may, on occasion, be barriers to progress; but many times a senior staff member gives balance, perspective and objectivity to the faculty. Many school principals have been grateful for the mature understanding of an older teacher who knows the community from years of residence there, who takes a counseling and supporting role with younger teachers, and whose trusted judgment is reassuring to parents and community leaders. Supervisors and principals help by giving recognition to the competencies gained through years of service. Opportunities can be utilized for the older teachers to make a valued contribution from the wealth of their experience.

This part of the chapter has attempted to show that the teacher's own personality and life history are reflected in his work with children. Expectancies about child behavior and about the role of adults are learned early in life and become a part of personality. Most people have strong emotional convictions about the rightness of their own ideals and values. If

teachers are to understand and guide the growth of all children, they must view themselves and their backgrounds with objectivity. Probably no other profession involves more immediate conflict with lifelong attitudes and fundamental aspects of personality. School life and the teacher's role in society exert other pressures upon teachers. Relationships with colleagues, induction into the profession, participation in community and family life, as well as retirement, present critical issues in the teacher's personal adjustment.

The Teacher's Relationship with Children

Teachers Face Some Emotional Hazards and Rewards in Working with Children.

The child, too, faces many adjustments. These begin when he first comes to school and continue with each succeeding school day and year. Sometimes the child becomes disturbed over a playground incident, a family quarrel or a personal anxiety. Hate and love, fear and compassion, irritability and respect, work in every personality. The child's emotions are often deflected from friend, parent or self and expressed toward the teacher.

The young child meets new social-emotional adjustments when entering school.

In the middle of the fifth period the volcano exploded. Mrs. Leslie had been expecting it for days, even weeks. George had argued with her, scowled at her and sullenly refused to write his assignments. Sooner or later something was going to break. George broke first. She had been explaining to him, personally, over the heads of silently-studying students, that yes, indeed, he was to answer the first *ten* questions at the end of the chapter. "Ten is too many," George repeated. Then, he suddenly slammed down his book, and stamped toward the door shouting, "I can't stand this any more!" The class looked toward him as he banged the door behind him. Mrs. Leslie waved the others back to their studies. After a few interested whispers, quiet reigned. But Mrs. Leslie was shocked and worried. George would head straight for—where? What would the principal think? As soon as the hour was up, she rushed to the office, hoping to catch Mr. Harding during the brief break. He was in the hall, luckily. George had found him, and the two had talked for half an hour. Mr. Harding reassured Mrs. Leslie. George was a difficult student, always had been. They would try to work something out.

Such incidents happen. What does it do to a teacher when they happen? Something triggered this behavior. George's teacher could not help but ask, "What did I do?"—and know at the same time that an incident at home, a peer relationship or any one of a number of things may have brought about this crisis. A teacher must live through such incidents with the possibility of their recurrence.

Daily the teacher interacts with thirty, forty or one hundred-fifty different personalities. Some are emotionally rewarding, some wearing, some deeply disturbing. In a business office a change of duties often minimizes personality clashes. But, except for occasional program changes, a teacher must keep the children that are assigned to the class; and the children must remain with their teacher. Children find some teachers difficult to accept. Teachers, too, are human—they find some children far from easy to like; yet others seem completely charming. Teachers are not supposed to be irritated by or to dislike any child. If they do, they feel guilty. At such times teachers are haunted by a professional ethic that says, "You must accept all children."

Teachers must
make new
acceptances
and adjust-
ments with
each new group
of children.

A new series of adjustments and acceptances must occur with each group of children. The emotional charge of one group will be different from that of another. Jenkins and Lippitt, in their revealing study¹ demonstrate use of the one-way screen through which many teachers work. Teachers may want to see children, feel for them, reach toward them. But because of the structure in some classes children do not see teachers, do not feel for them and do not reach toward them. The maturing emotional interests that come from continued association with other human beings are lacking for these teachers.

When the emotional rewards of working with youngsters are slight, teaching acquires a drab, steady sameness. Sometimes teachers are glad when they can say goodbye to *this* class. "I'm glad I have that John only another month," says his teacher: John reciprocates with "How long till vacation? Then

¹Jenkins, David H., and Lippitt, Ronald. *Interpersonal Perceptions of Teachers, Students, and Parents*. Bulletin No. 1. Washington, D. C.: Division of Adult Education, National Education Association, 1951.

I won't have to see *her* every day." Once in a while, just before the end of the year, teachers and students in such classes break through to each other and find that each is a likable and interesting human being. In some instances, a sense of relief for both students and teachers is the sad note on which the year ends.

However, the opposite also happens. After appraising one another, learning each other's quirks and fancies, students and teacher may settle into a mutually satisfying educational experience. Then, just as the full rewards might be reaped, the process of getting acquainted and of building relationships must begin again for teacher and students alike.

Teachers and children can develop mutually satisfying educational experiences.

False Expectations Interfere with Relationships and Communication.

A child may be prejudged in school through reports about who his parents are in the community or through tales about his family. The child whose father is the town drunk may think that teachers are saying, "Guess we can't expect anything from a boy with a father like that." The child whose father is superintendent of schools may find himself treated like china, and like the proverbial minister's son, expected to live up to impossibly high standards. The children who come from "across the tracks" or from "up on the hill" may find ready-made teacher expectancies awaiting them in the classroom.

Teachers may carry reputations back and forth without realizing the damage this may do. To the new teacher in the seventh grade they may say, "You have one of the Acosta tribe? We have a new one every year. They can't learn a thing and give you all kinds of trouble. No one in that family ever got along with a teacher."

A teacher's preconceptions may influence his relations with a child.

Some children are handicapped by following in the footsteps of an older brother or sister. When Bill enters Mrs. Henderson's fifth grade, he may be greeted by "Bill Turner? Oh, you must be Susan's brother. What a nice girl she was. I am sure you and I are going to get along very well." Bill, who at this age considers his older sister poisonous, grits his teeth and thinks to himself: "That Susan. Always makes teachers think she is so good. Something tells me I'm not going to like Mrs. Henderson." And the new year begins badly for both of them.

Such expectations interfere with the teacher's perception of what this child is really like—that Jim Acosta is eager to learn and that Bill is not another version of docile Susan. Children above all seek to be themselves, to be viewed and considered as unique personalities. When they realize that teachers have preconceptions about them, children feel uneasy or misunderstood. A child may react to this stereotyping with rebellion. He may withdraw into himself so that he will not show his inability to live up to the teacher's view of him. Or he may desperately try to be as bright, as compliant, or as mischievous as the sibling who went ahead of him. He may deeply resent the admonition that "the minister's son never uses such language" or his own conviction that "if you live in a trailer you can't make the drama club."

The child feels unfairly treated when the teacher's view of him is influenced and prejudiced. When children are viewed within a framework that tags and categorizes them, the teacher is unable to build significant relationships; for then he is not sensitive to the child's true characteristics but responds to prejudged characteristics. Because these are often false, or at best oversimplified notions of the child's personality, the teacher's plans are not appropriate to the child's needs. The conflict between a teacher's stereotyped view of a child and the real child becomes a barrier to communication and to education.

Parents' memories of school may influence their attitudes toward teachers.

Parents spend a great deal of time discussing school and teachers with their children. In many homes, children are carefully prepared for the first day of school. What do parents tell their children about teachers? Insofar as the parents remember teachers with appreciation and consider their school years satisfying, they convey that view to their children. Do parents really remember their own schooling and their teachers? Memory distorts and selects. In the grab-bag of thousands of memories those that serve the need of the moment are chosen. Parents who feel insecure in authority will probably impress upon their offspring that teachers are stern disciplinarians who will "make you obey and mind." The parent who projects unfulfilled ambitions onto the child may tell him, "Be good in school and obey the teacher. Then you will get

good grades." The parent who felt defeated by school and who was regarded as an unwanted outsider may tell his child, "Teachers always have pets. They aren't fair no matter what you do."

These are negative views of the teacher passed on to children. There are positive ones as well. Sometimes these, too, interfere with the teacher-child relationship. The parent who had a wonderful teacher may judge his child's teachers by this standard: "Now *that* Miss Williams I had—she really was a friend. She made you learn, too. They don't have many as good nowadays." Or, "I'm glad you have a teacher like Mr. Goldhammer. He reminds me of one I had when I was in high school. We really got along well in his room." But the child may need quite a different teacher from that of his father or mother and may not get along with the kind of personality his father or his mother found compatible.

The stereotyping of the teacher figure is an ancient process that has been going on for centuries. Literature of all ages is replete with such characterizations which have passed into the folklore. The new versions fashioned by mass media depict romantic figures. These are as removed from reality as the older, drabber caricatures. Teachers often feel the pressures of stereotyping which force them into a mold. Some parents and children seem to feel that a teacher ought to act and look like a *teacher* and be somehow different from a realtor or a truck driver. In some communities this stereotyped conception has produced a recognizable type—"school teacher." The barrier of mutual stereotyping prevents communication and significant relationships between child and the teacher.

The Peer Group Is Sometimes in Conflict with the Teacher.

The school is often the child's crucial social adventure. Here others can make or break him—can accept him into the gang or tease him unmercifully. Every classroom, from kindergarten through high school, is a maze of social relations. Children hate and love; they make overtures which are accepted or repulsed. Sometimes they must sacrifice the respect and liking of the teacher in order to be commended by their friends.

Mutual stereotyping blocks effective communication between teachers and children.

The school is often a crucial social venture for a child.



During his school years a child will have many of the following experiences:

Being a newcomer. Isolated, lonely, the new child has to win his way into already well-established groups. In numerous schools, despite the "friends" that the teacher assigns, the newcomer has to run the gamut of conflict and teasing.

Finding his role in the peer group. As the child grows, group expectancies shift. The skills that won a child status at one age may not be valued later on in another group. Through the reward of approval the group may accentuate behaviors that will lead to trouble and will bring him into conflict with the teacher.

Facing group pressures. Many young people go along with the crowd because they have never learned to say "no." The peer group has become their major focus in life; they cannot face ostracism and isolation from it. A group sometimes involves members in delinquency or near-delinquency that many of the children would gladly evade, but they have never learned how to live without *this* group.

Reconciling peer and family values. Sometimes the child's friendship group is rejected by his parents. Or certain children in the group are singled out for parental disapproval—often augmented by school criticism. The resulting conflicts of needs and loyalties can become intense and destructive.

These experiences illustrate some of the conflicts children face as they grow up in the peer group. Many children learn the necessary social skills easily and naturally and derive their deepest satisfactions from peer associations. Other children suffer many traumatic incidents as they seek to participate in group life. In our society children cannot escape the demands of groups. Nor can the teacher afford to be insensitive to the structure and values of the group.

As they grow up, children face many conflicting standards.

Mr. Anthony lacks insight into the group life of his class. He wonders why small annoyances interfere with his procedures; why there is vociferous and noisy complaint when he makes an assignment—which rarely comes in as directed. If he could listen to the students at recess, he would find that in some fashion he has offended the group code. He deliberately has broken up the cliques he discovered when he gave a sociometric test. When he assigns group work he “gives the children new group experiences” by putting them with those outside their friendship group. Mr. Anthony mistakenly believes that friendships are static; that the results of his sociometric tests the first week will hold for the semester. Mr. Anthony is using a new technique, but it makes him more, rather than less, the martinet. “Sociometric tests are a lot of nonsense,” he says at the end of the semester. “They don’t help at all. Just a lot of work. The students give me less trouble when I give individual assignments and don’t have all that group work.”

The Grading System May Interfere with Relationships.

American schools have avoided the European examination system but have put a premium on grades. Grading policies often stand in the way of genuine education. Many schools have minimized the unwholesome effects of report cards by providing parent-teacher conferences. Grading and judging, however, continuously go on within the classroom.

The school’s grading policies should facilitate learning.

“A” is no longer merely a letter in the alphabet, it is *success*, and “F,” an uninspired letter, is *failure*. When the child and the teacher become enmeshed in the judging process, their relationship becomes distorted. Judging tends to enter every conference and to hover over every activity. The question, “Will I pass?” haunts many school-age children. Learning and judging expressed on the report card become confused, as though interchangeable. It isn’t what you learn, but the grade

you get that counts. It isn't how you learn, but whether you passed the test. Just below the conscious level, both teacher and students realize that this interferes with their real purposes. Change, however, would mean the acceptance of responsibility by students for their own education. Because they are young, many children wholeheartedly resist the acceptance of such responsibility. Some teachers also resist the change in teaching methods required by a new focus in evaluation. Teachers and students who desire to preserve the *status quo* of judging and grading are supported by those parents who do not understand the excitement and satisfaction of learning for its own sake.

How does it feel to be judged all the time? Children come to know teachers primarily as people who punish the "wrong" and reward the "right." Students hide their lack of knowledge and confusion from the very person who is assigned to help and teach them. Grading may also produce false illusions and values. Many children come to believe that correct answers and neatly solved problems are more important than the methods used to obtain them.

Failure to a child may be a traumatic experience.

When a child fails, whose failure is it? Failure to a child may indeed be a traumatic experience, the kind of punishment that cripples and destroys. This places special responsibility upon the teacher. Since many people believe that anyone can learn almost anything if properly taught, the failure of a child is viewed by these people as essentially the teacher's failure. Many people believe, too, that only those deficient in *will* do not learn. The child or his parents are blamed presumably because Molly "just decided" she wasn't going to learn. Do children "just decide" these things? Or is it that the teacher was unable to *motivate* Molly to *want* to learn? Or is it that all can't learn the same things?

The teacher's role is that of guide and counselor.

In the classroom, motivation is subtle and expensive. The call on teacher time and energy goes deeper than changing this schedule or that unit. The role of the teacher must change from judge and taskmaster to guide and counselor. Flexibility of plans, not adherence to the same standards for all children, is demanded.

School organization fosters some expectations which knowl-

edge and understanding of learning prove wrong. Inability to change the school structure in keeping with knowledge leads to unjustified expectations. For example, grading and promotion policies have long needed re-examination. Research has suggested the desirability of age grouping or grouping in terms of social maturity rather than achievement grouping of children. Nevertheless, a child is placed in the fourth grade, the ninth grade, or the eleventh grade; and textbooks and achievement tests are built for the "ninth-grade level." Students are expected to meet this artificial standard. Teachers say, "Although he is in the ninth grade, he has only a fourth-grade reading ability." High school teachers sometimes comment that "John should not be in high school." These comments reveal an expectation which is not based in reality. Even in the first grade, and increasingly thereafter, a wide range of abilities will be found among the students. Recognition of these facts means that the differences in children should not be penalized. How do we accept children? Actually, supervisors can help teachers re-examine these attitudes and expectations and, along with administrators, help to relieve many of the pressures in school which perpetuate unreal expectations.

Administrators can help in relieving pressures on teachers that result in unreal expectations

In teaching, the emotional load that the teacher always carries is never fully expressed and never relinquished. Some children fail, others succeed, and others "get by." The teacher knows that, no matter how well the days go, things always could be better because educating others is a task never completed and never perfect. Like the factory worker who works on the assembly line, the teacher usually does not see the final product and may not recognize his contribution to the final result. Many other forces enter into children's education as they move from teacher to teacher. Who can say that it was the affection and support of his ninth-grade teacher that kept Jimmie on the straight and narrow path years later when he was thirty-eight? Which of a variety of school experiences inspired John to study electronics at the age of nineteen?

This section has indicated that interpersonal relationships and conflicts between teacher and child are ever-present and

The teacher should be skilled in solving problems of human relationships.

crucial in learning. Some are outcomes of the school organization and its particular ways of functioning. Many, however, are inherent in teaching, anywhere, under any circumstances, whether in kindergarten or in graduate school. Analysis of the quality of teacher-student relationships and of the hazards to communication illuminates the causes of teacher distress that often go unnoticed or ignored. Teachers can create good learning environments when they come to grips with problems of relationships and become skilled in solving them.

Parents and Teachers Need To Work Together

Of the dilemmas faced by teachers, those posed by parents often appear the most insoluble. Take the matter of parental aspirations for children. This is a *compound* of the American faith in the future, belief in the magic of education, and the hope that children will fulfill parents' dreams. Thus, Jim just must become a doctor. Sally, who only wants a modest life, must be groomed for society. And Dick, talented in art, must prepare for a career in business. These parents say with sincerity that they are being "reasonable" and merely want the children to profit from mature insights. They are aware of



the opportunities missed in their own lives and do not want to see their own mistakes repeated.

From the beginning, our culture abounds in norms, averages and minimum essentials. Do the children weigh enough? Did they walk soon enough? Are they reading well enough? Are they popular enough? Affection from the parents may come to be conditioned by children's ability to "measure up." Parental demand for conformity to standards is a continual source of conflict with children and sometimes with teachers. Thus, the middle-class parent hammers away at respect for cleanliness, property, conformity and success and expects the school to reinforce his efforts. Lest children be led away from these values, parents may try to keep their children away from boys and girls whose parents do not have these standards. They may object to or interfere with school practices which stress the interaction of all children.

There are many possibilities for strain and misunderstanding in the relationships between teachers and parents. Many parents frankly admit that they are afraid of teachers—afraid because of memories of their own teachers; afraid because they are often called to school when something is wrong and seldom when something is right; afraid because, being aware of their tremendous responsibility in rearing their children, they fear that the teacher may find them wanting as parents. Asked what they liked and disliked most in their relationships with the school, a group of parents said that they needed to be told that they were doing a good job as mothers and fathers. One parent, expressing this reaction for the group, said, "I can face any problem with my child if the teacher will just let me know first that he thinks I am a good parent."

If a good learning environment is to be arranged for children, ways of maintaining a partnership of parents and teachers must be found. Although the parents' relationship may appear to be detrimental to the child, the teacher must also recognize the needs, strains and problems of the parent. Disapproval will not remove the cause of the difficulty but may aggravate it as the parent becomes defensive or insecure.

Teachers, too, frequently admit some temerity in contacts with parents. Many of the same problems which trouble par-

Parents often expect schools to reinforce their own expectations for children.

Parents need reassurance from teachers that they are succeeding as parents.

ents also trouble teachers. Foremost is the fact that parent-teacher contacts are nearly always over a child's difficulty. Since the teacher has not been successful in working with the child, the parent's attitude may be interpreted as criticism; and this increases the teacher's sense of guilt or inadequacy.

The teacher must recognize that some complaints come from homes in which the family is disorganized. Mother may be divorced, but she must work to increase the father's contribution. Her children are progressing only indifferently at school. Can she accept the trouble as arising out of family discord? Sometimes. More often she needs some object, such as the school or teacher to blame.

It is easy to see why teachers find certain parents difficult. Each family has its own world, complete with desires, aspirations, hopes and fears. And to each family, its own world matters most. It does not often occur to the parent that each class represents thirty or more families. To reconcile the demands of these different worlds poses a trying task. The school must compromise to meet the demands of all its patrons. Fortunately, many parents lend understanding and support because they recognize the pressures upon the teacher. With other families, the teacher works toward understanding and cooperation in the face of criticism or disapproval.

Many schools are making strides toward alleviating misunderstanding. An atmosphere of partnership is developed before the child enters elementary, junior high or senior high school. An initial meeting with parents explains the program, considers their questions and reassures them that the school is concerned about the child as a person. Entering each level of schooling poses new problems for children and parents. The first-grade or kindergarten child is leaving home for the first time, and his parents' concern is deepened by a sense of losing him. The child who enters a junior high school or senior high school is also embarking on another step of growing up, a step which tugs at parental ties. He may be having lunch away from home for the first time. Almost surely he is attending a much larger school. He is branching into adolescent social patterns which give his parents concern. If he is college-bound, this fact colors his parents' attitude toward

Parent meetings
help to alleviate
misunderstand-
ings.

school and may increase their pressure for achievement and conformity. At every level, therefore, a variety of teacher-parent contacts is needed to keep communication flowing.

After the teacher has had time to know the child, a group meeting is arranged to describe the school program and to reassure fathers and mothers that the school is working with them for the good of the child. Conferences, either as a substitute for or as an addition to the usual report card, keep them informed and build their confidence in the school. If contacts begin before the child could possibly be in trouble, they help to reduce the tensions between parents and teachers.

Parent-teacher
conferences
build confidence
in the school.

For such a program to succeed, teachers must study the techniques of conducting parent meetings and conferences. The teacher who begins parent conferences with criticism of the child or who tells the father or mother what to do, rather than sympathetically letting the parent think through his own problems, will do more harm than good.

If the school doors are closed at a given time each day and if few community activities bring teachers and parents together, then tensions and misunderstandings will be hard to dissipate. On the other hand, a school which opens its doors for general community recreation and hobby activity and other means of bringing the school and community together will have few misunderstandings.

Finally, the aspirations and standards which some fathers and mothers hold for their children often are in conflict with the attempts of teachers to guide children in terms of their abilities and abiding interests. Although misunderstanding may occur, parents and teachers can work together to share their insights and to reinforce one another's efforts for the welfare of children. Parents' interest in and concern for their children offer rich resources for deepening understanding of children and for enlisting support in the improvement of education.

The Demands of the School as a Social Institution

Administrative Expectancies

Betty Riley heard with dismay the news that her principal, Mr. Brooks, had been transferred. What now?

As a new teacher, it had taken her two years to learn how to work with Mr. Brooks. He was so noncommittal! And try as hard as she could, she never did find out what he really believed an elementary school program should be. Whenever she wanted to try something new, Betty would spend several weeks building up to it, first mentioning that another school was doing an interesting job. Finally she would ask, "Do you think we might try this sometime?"

Now, how about Mr. Kent, the new principal? Must she start all over again with him? "Mr. Kent," she said as she stopped him in the hall, "I'd like to ask your permission to try something." For the next ten minutes Betty described the educational advantages of having the sixth grade publish a school newspaper. When she finally stopped for breath, Mr. Kent said, "Miss Riley, has anyone said you may not do this? Let's propose it to the faculty at lunch; it sounds like a wonderful idea."

The most important function of the principal is educational leadership.

In the next few months, Betty was to learn what it meant to work with a principal who was a good educator. He understood her and the other teachers and treated them as *persons*. She was to learn that, unlike Mr. Brooks, who had no over-all philosophy, Mr. Kent took a clear, consistent position; he was eager to explore everybody's proposals.

The classroom teacher has to understand his administrator or supervisor. If he learns intuitively or consciously how to work with persons in positions of authority, he may be successful in creating new learning situations for children.

The teachers who work with a Mr. Kent are fortunate. Occasionally, a faculty has to live with a "don't-rock-the-boat" administrator whose sole yardstick is conjecture about community reaction. Sometimes the administrator or supervisor who has high personal aspirations may use his teachers for his own advancement without realizing it. His teachers ask themselves, what does he want of me? Can I do it? And, sometimes cynically, they may say, "For what purpose am I being used now?" Unfortunately, other principals are solely business managers whose main guidelines are low costs, smooth routines and clean buildings.

Each of these administrators creates a framework within which teachers must work. When the Betty Rileys understand this framework and learn to work creatively with each administrator-personality the learning situation is malleable. In schools in which administrators and teachers work as peers—

as colleagues with different, mutually beneficial functions—a rich learning environment can result.

Administrative planning facilitates a good learning environment in the school. In a large school, there may be little personal communication between the teacher and superintendent. The superintendent, nevertheless, plays an important part in setting an atmosphere in which teachers are able to carry on creative teaching. He establishes a feeling of easy and accurate communication, although this is difficult in a large school. The person in an administrative position cannot, and should not, participate in all the activities of the school. He must, however, have frequent contact with all of the school staff. If his information is always screened through or interpreted by others, it is subject to the limitations of their understanding before it reaches him. He should work with at least one committee of teachers each year in order to keep contact open. He should also build the kind of school atmosphere in which everyone feels free to talk about both problems and successes without fear of rivalry or favoritism.

In some schools, older teachers warn new teachers against doing extra work or taking on extra activities. Occasionally school officials discourage the adoption of new procedures or the conducting of experimentation in the school. If the administrator makes an opportunity for new teachers to work together and to know his approval of their ideas, he does much to encourage improved practices.

School Routines

All schools have routines. Some reflect the administrator's personality, others reflect the necessities of institutional life.

Teachers often say that they would be happy if they were left alone to *teach* without so many clerical duties and classroom interruptions.

Mary Jane Howell has closed the hall door. Another school day has begun. First, she has opening exercises; she records the absences on a pad—to be transferred at recess time to her state register. Milk money must be collected. Oh, yes! The bulletin she found in her school mailbox must be read to the class. It includes a reminder of the paper drive the P.T.A. is sponsoring, and a statement that this is supply day. Miss Hammond, the school clerk,

Administrators can help create a rich learning environment for artistic teaching.

The superintendent can create an environment which encourages improved practices.



will not dispense supplies for another week if the order list is not in by noon.

Finally, the class is at work. The public address system suddenly blares forth. Mr. James, the principal, reminds everyone that bicycles are to be placed in the bike racks. Will the two boys who left theirs lying down please go out and place them properly!

In many schools, the clerical staff is a cooperative team with the instructional staff. Additional important members on this team are custodians and other noncertificated personnel. Not only do they provide direct and specific services toward the maintenance and operation of buildings and grounds, but through their interest and enthusiasm they can make a distinct, positive contribution to the tone, morale and atmosphere of the school.

Non-certificated personnel contribute to instruction.

In her own school, Mary Jane Howell must meet the schedule set by Miss Hammond, the clerk. Miss Hammond is *the power*. Principals may come and go, but she has been there for years. If she is displeased, teachers may be blocked on obtaining many little items. Yes, the supply list *must* get in on time and in the proper form. This may be easy for Elsie Crane across the hall. She always knows what she will teach each week. But Mary Jane Howell will have trouble. Her class activities are growing in many directions, and it is hard to anticipate needs for supplies, in advance.

School routines are increased with the enrichment of instructional materials.² The availability of films, slides, maps, traveling libraries, museums and many other materials requires new routines. Whether these new services will be a pleasure or an aggravation will depend upon the ability of faculties, administrators, clerks and custodians to plan for these services cooperatively and intelligently. The obtaining of a projector from the office can be a long, involved negotiation; or it can be a simple arrangement whereby two children go to a supply room, check off the item being borrowed and wheel it on its cart to the classroom. Adequate instructional facilities mean flexibility of routines and ready availability of services and materials.

Flexible routines aid in good use of instructional facilities.

The organization of the school day into fifty-minute periods

² Cf. Ch. VIII.

punctuated by bells has delayed the improvement of learning in many secondary schools.

Bill Larsen teaches English at Jefferson High. Bill is determined to use current materials, contemporary literature and student interests in his curriculum. Each period he meets a different class. Not only must he respond to 166 different personalities during the day, but he must also move from room to room. In desperation he has bought a shopping cart into which he packs his daily teaching materials. Somewhat self-consciously he wheels his cart from room to room. How long will Bill keep trying?

Many schools have found solutions to this problem—in double-period assignments or a homeroom for the teacher.

Faculty meetings
should offer
opportunities to
share problems
and ideas.

Maybe Bill Larsen will present his problem at the weekly teachers' meeting. Whether he solves his problem there will depend upon the type of teachers' meeting in his school. If the faculty meeting is a clearinghouse in which members share their problems, he may get help from his colleagues. But if this meeting is a humdrum affair in which the principal reads a bulletin aloud and lectures the staff on student behavior, Bill may have to continue pushing his shopping cart.

Whether Bill presents his problem to the faculty may depend on how he conceives his role in this group. If he is the new teacher, he may feel that he must not speak up. If he feels secure with his colleagues, he may press his suggestions.

In conclusion, the problem of school routines is ever-present. The very word routine implies reduction of a conscious activity to an automatic habit. Routines reduce the necessity to make decisions anew each day. They can be a facilitation or a barrier to children's growth. Constructive use of routines involves school-wide planning, participation of all staff members, and a focus on the realities of each school.

In-Service Education for a Rapidly Changing Time

The drive to conformity and standardization in our culture is reinforced by one of the greatest of American achievements—public education. As we strive to educate all the children of all the people in ways consonant with theories of learning and personality development, we are confronted by a serious dilemma. How can a public demand for small classes which

are dedicated to the needs of individuals be created in the face of rapid increases in the child population?

Increases in enrollment, growing urbanization, tensions about high costs of living, and anxieties regarding possible world war create intense pressures on the schools. Skyrocketing enrollments have often brought double sessions and minimum programs, fewer instructional materials and facilities, and greater standardization of curricula. Public hostility toward innovations is often increased during periods of national and international uneasiness. On the other hand, demands have been created for a "grass-roots" curriculum drawn from the realities of community life. Financial support for resources focused upon children's individual problems and for group activities of smaller numbers of children has grown. Large numbers of citizens have become sensitive to the need for developing a curriculum to meet a rapidly changing social scene and its scientific realities.

Present educational knowledge highlights as never before the dual role of the school in American society: to conserve and to transmit the cultural heritage; and to teach those concepts, skills, attitudes and appreciations necessary for constructive participation in a rapidly changing society. In one breath, the public demands that schools provide stability for their young; in the other, that schools prepare them for unknown innovations.

This dual role is reflected in the behavior of administrators and supervisors who often fluctuate between the two positions. Other administrators meet this challenge by an either-or decision; they decide that the school must be a conservator of the heritage only, or an experimental institution only. Under such circumstances, many teachers retreat into standardized procedures and curricula which seem "safe."

How can the profession perform its conserving function at the same time that it develops the problem-solving skills suited to a new and scientific age? A thoughtful and creative approach to curriculum development can utilize these dual roles as the two sides of a well-rounded program. However, society's new demands upon a rapidly growing profession often fall heavily upon the receptive and conscientious teacher.

Pressures of the modern world increase the problems which schools face.

Creative curriculum development recognizes the dual function of the school.

Harry Jones sipped his second cup of coffee hastily. "Jane," he called. "Remember I won't be home for dinner tonight."

"You won't! Harry, this is the third night in succession!" Jane looked from her husband to the two children reproachfully. This was no way for a family to live, her look said.

"Well," Harry said defensively, "I can't help it. Monday night was the monthly meeting of the executive committee of the State Teachers Association, last night was P.T.A., and this afternoon we have that curriculum study group. You know, we meet from four to six, have dinner together and then meet until nine. I have to go; I signed up for it on the district's in-service education schedule."

Harry Jones is a classroom teacher. He is ambitious and wants to get ahead in the profession. He is interested in doing a good job with his students and in improving the educational program. The combination of these two purposes catapults him into numerous activities. Harry is deluged with announcements of workshops and conferences, with invitations to work on committees in his school district and in state, regional and national organizations. Harry Jones may become the victim of his professional ambition. On the other hand, it is only through teachers like Harry Jones that the profession keeps pace with the rapidly changing times. Should he join everything? What is the yardstick for constructive participation in the profession?

In contrast to Harry Jones is May Lowell, who teaches in a small rural high school. May is a creative person, continually seeking new ways of effective teaching. May Lowell is hungry for professional companionship. Her only opportunity to share extensively with other teachers is the annual state meeting, at which she hears inspirational speakers in the big auditorium.

May Lowell needs more association in organizations. Harry Jones needs fewer meetings. These should be carefully selected to meet his needs. The communities in which educators work are so varied that a formula approach to teacher in-service education is dangerous.

The task of creating a good learning environment is a continuous one. It is never possible to sit back with a sigh of relief and say, "There now, that's done." This task is *never* done! The learning environment must respond to changes in

A teacher's
total time should
represent a
balance
between
professional
meetings,
teaching
assignment, and
non-professional
activities.

the ideas, interests and readiness of the people who are a part of it. For this reason, the emphasis on *creating* a learning environment is an emphasis on in-service programs—programs of evaluation and enrichment, of examination of the environment, and of exploration as to ways in which it can be enriched. What evidence do we have of the effect of the school on the students? What new resources are available? What are better ways of using the materials we have? How can we improve our communication with parents and with others in the community? What new insights can be gained by teachers? Such questions must be asked continually. In both the elementary and secondary schools which have supervisory assistance, the efforts of all those who come in contact with the children must be coordinated.

What can we do to consider the learning environment for teachers as well as for students? How can we provide time and opportunity for teachers to consider ways of coordinating their efforts? To examine new materials? To evaluate their methods? To understand themselves better? School procedures often do not promote self-examination. Many people have stout resistance against anything that would lead them to re-examine possibilities of their own shortcomings. One object of in-service meetings should be to provide for catharsis—to enable teachers to express their feelings and to examine them. In any good school there is emphasis on the emotional well-being of teachers. Emphasis on the intellectual to the exclusion of the emotional is often a subterfuge to prevent re-examination of the individual's own drives.

Supervisory and administrative groups arrange for teachers to share ideas and help them to examine, without fear, their attitudes and their practices. Workshops, study groups or regular teachers meetings planned for evaluation of practices and programs are effective in accomplishing this.

Democratic participation takes time. A good learning environment for students cannot result from a hurried, tense, overcrowded environment for teachers. If teachers are to work with parents, time must be provided. If groups of teachers are to work on problems together, some time must be found for this within the school day.

The learning environment for teachers should provide for self-examination.

Arranging time for in-service growth is not easy. Boards of education sometimes believe that the colleges have taken care of professional training. Study of the activities of other school systems, however, usually establishes the value of this work. In one school system, a regular corps of substitute teachers is hired. Three teachers are assigned for a half day every week to each elementary school to relieve teachers for committee meetings, parent interviews and other activities. Since the substitute teachers are regularly employed, they understand the program. Some secondary schools are rearranging schedules in order that all teachers of each grade may meet together once a week to consider student problems of that grade. In one secondary school, the class periods are longer than usual, but classes meet on a rotating schedule four days a week instead of five. Thus, the teacher is freed for such other staff duties as departmental and grade meetings. Another school system dismisses teachers an hour early one day a month for meetings. Between these monthly sessions are meetings held on the teachers' own time.

Released time
for teachers
stimulates
creativity on
professional
jobs.

The amount of energy which each teacher has for creative activities and at the same time for participation in other affairs in the community is a problem worthy of consideration. The planning program within a school should be organized to stimulate creative teaching and to involve teachers in professional development; it should protect them from over-organization which leaves them little time, energy or interest for anything else. Teachers should have time to take an active part in the phases of community living in which they are interested. Arrangements can be made, for example, for teachers as well as administrators to belong to service clubs or welfare groups.

If teachers are to work together effectively, they need the kind of relaxed social setting in which people feel free to talk or in which they can interact in informal relationships. An attractive and comfortable teachers' room helps. A cup of coffee before an after-school meeting is pleasant and relaxing. These may seem to be little things, but they sometimes make the difference between high and low morale.

In a state where the law permits, one high school principal

A good learning
environment is
important for
teacher growth.

expects his teachers to be able to leave their classes unsupervised long enough to drop into the teachers' room for a cup of coffee around 10:30 in the morning. He believes that purposeful class work can continue even when the teacher is not in the room. He hopes that the teachers will come often for coffee, and he himself is always there for a chat or conference. An elementary principal plans a coffee hour at the close of school in the teachers' room and usually stays there himself for friendly conversation about the day. This sort of friendly, informal contact maintains the morale of a school staff.

Many school systems are developing workshops for teachers. In one city, the heads of departments in the senior high schools conduct a series of seminars in which their members work on common problems. In another city, the art supervisors hold regular weekly workshops where teachers may get help in the various art media. The Michigan college agreement program in which high schools work on a continuous curriculum study has initiated week-end conferences for teachers in various regions of the state. Any member of the staff of a participating school may attend. Usually groups of teachers from a school go together to work on their problems. For teachers who desire college credit, a college staff offers courses for improving the local school program.

In another district, school system workshops are arranged at various times during the year. A summer workshop designed to coordinate and improve the social studies was organized by grades—from kindergarten through the twelfth grade—and staffed by school supervisors and by instructors from two universities. Credit was given at both institutions. At mid-term the school system followed the summer workshop with a one-week workshop for all teachers. In this, too, many different subjects were considered, although reading was given the primary emphasis. This workshop consisted of large and small group meetings in which were consultants from the two universities, although college credit was not offered. A school system which cannot afford its own workshop may profit by sending a group of teachers to a college workshop.

The teacher must feel free to ask for help. No single individual can do all that is necessary to know the child, the par-

Opportunities
for teachers
to ask for
assistance
should be
manifold.

ents, the community, as well as the content he is teaching. He must do what he can by himself, but he must use whatever assistance is available. Special teachers in music, art or physical education are helpful. The teacher needs to use them to help evaluate proposed activities and to help in establishing class plans. If he waits until the project is planned and seeks help only when something goes wrong or uses the special teacher apart from other activities in the classroom, he is missing opportunities to grow through the use of these specialists. Similarly in the secondary school, where communication among departments is difficult, grade level meetings which bring teachers together to learn from each other are essential. Secondary teachers may not know even the serious physical defects of the students unless central planning provides for the sharing of information.

What does the teacher expect in his relationships with other teachers, with the administrator of the school or with the teachers who are assigned to special services? Is there an atmosphere of self-examination in which one does not hesitate to reveal problems or difficulties? Or are problems considered a weakness to be concealed? New teachers in one school system recently met to consider ways the beginning teacher could be helped. Their report stressed the need for regular meetings with someone who had no rating power. No individual feels entirely free to discuss his difficulties with someone who can later use this information to lower his rating. Although, by and large, the administrator or supervisor would not use such a weapon against the teacher, how can the teacher be reassured that his problems will not be interpreted as weaknesses? Similarly, the prestige people in a school, though they may have no rating power, may be the people who determine the social rating of the teacher with his fellows.

School life
often has
institutional
aspects which
may interfere
with learning.

In summary, it is evident that school life has many institutional aspects which may interfere with the teacher's efforts to create a good learning environment for children. The standards and expectations of the administrator and the nature of school routines may facilitate or hamper opportunities for

learning. Through cooperative staff planning and a program of in-service growth for all personnel, however, such barriers can be minimized and a school atmosphere created in which learning can flourish.

Community Expectations

Communities come in many shapes, sizes and varieties. Neighborhoods also are different from each other. What, after all, is a community?

Only in the remote byways can one expect to find homogeneity of community interests or values. Change has come so rapidly, people have moved so often, world events have been so disrupting, that it is difficult to characterize the American scene. What then is the problem of the teacher in meeting community expectations? He faces some issues that are fundamental. If these issues remain unresolved, education will become increasingly vulnerable to criticism and pressure; teaching will become less attractive to talented and able persons; and young people will undertake their citizenship tasks with tragically minimal training. What are these issues that teachers must resolve in meeting community expectations?

Probably the most important and yet the most disturbing problem that the teacher faces is that of formulating his own educational philosophy. The perplexity lies frequently in the contradiction between the philosophy and research learned in the teachers college preparation and the beliefs and points of view held in certain communities. Shall the teacher hold fast to the values learned in college? Or shall he adapt to community expectations? The choice, unfortunately, is not usually so clear-cut. Diverse and inconsistent deficiencies make the teacher unsure of his judgments. For generations teachers have emerged from college and entered teaching to be greeted by the cynics of the profession with "Just forget your education courses; those educational theories aren't practical." Some new teachers, uncertain about specific techniques, are often too quickly and mistakenly convinced that the "old ways" are best after all.

While certain institutional arrangements of schools tend to preserve many outworn methods, the community—often

Gaps between philosophy, research in education, community beliefs should be bridged.

The community has a potent influence on the teacher's philosophy.

the invisible guest at faculty meetings—has an equally potent influence on the teacher's point of view. "They" want us to teach only the "three R's." "They" will raise eyebrows—a few will even cry "subversive"—if we discuss intergroup relations or social problems. "They" won't let teachers act like human beings. Thus the new teacher must decide whether he will try to live up to the best in his professional preparation or act as he is told the community wishes him to act.

When the teacher hears that "they" want school people to do *this* or *that* in school practice, a healthy curiosity ought to come to the teacher's rescue. Who are "they"? The schools always have been the focus of many interests. Today the pressures on schools are intense—some constructive and some destructive.

During periods of social unrest there is resistance to educational change.

In a time of social unrest, it is natural for the public to desire "constants" to hold to—institutions that retain familiar shape and meaning. The school, reaching into the intimate daily lives of the nation's families, is such a landmark. We have all gone to school, our parents have before us, and our children are school-bound. Change in this familiar institution is change that strikes home. Resistance to change on the part of certain elements in the community is a persistent problem of the profession.

The community speaks with many voices.

Yet the community is not an entity and is rarely unified in opinion. It speaks with many voices. A large and often articulate group feels most comfortable with the schools as they have always been. Another vocal segment of the community views current school trends as dangerous and wishes to see the school look and act more like the school of several generations ago. Still another important body of opinion wishes to see the schools keep pace with new needs and is critical of an institution which is behind the times.

Each segment of opinion has its spokesman. This spokesman may be a powerful national organization or merely the doctor's wife who chats with her child's teacher in the post office. Teachers and administrators alike feel buffeted—and often defeated—by the conflicting evidence as to what the public really wants of the schools. Education must listen to all the voices that speak for the community. Compromises are

necessary. Yet each teacher must decide on what ground he will stand firm. His own integrity and that of the profession demand that educational practices desist from changing with the wind but that they be based on principle and conviction.

Implicit in this question is the assumption by both educators and community members that schools could be doing better—but better than *what?* and for what purpose? These two questions are complex issues. Should the schools be better at the same tasks undertaken by schools fifty years ago? Obviously, many of these tasks remain unchanged; others have been discarded; and still others have been added. Certainly all children need to learn to read, write and spell; but other means of communication also have become important in recent years. Children today must learn to appraise television, advertising campaigns and even singing commercials. The arts, through which people interpret one generation to the next, are the most lasting and perhaps the most significant forms of human expression. Aesthetic experiences offer new resources for mental health in an age of uncertainty and tension. Mathematics and physical sciences have assumed new importance in an industrialized and mechanized society. Political science is fundamental to national survival and international understanding. Public health and safety have become essential information.

Parents ask—and have a right to ask—“How well are the schools doing?” The problem for the teacher in answering this question lies in the different emphases of different groups of parents. The horizons of certain parents have not lifted beyond their own school days; other parents have specific goals for their children—mathematical competence, college preparation, good citizenship. The task of the teacher is not to attempt to meet all demands, nor to compare the old education with the new to the detriment of either, but to attain conviction regarding the elements of sound education for our time. This conviction is gained by understanding the community of which the school is a part, the children in the classroom, and the particular segment of history in which we live. Only then will teachers have a basis for appraisal of their efforts as they relate children's learning to daily life.

Educational convictions should result from understanding the community, children and present-day needs.

Teachers' expectations of behavior may not be compatible with reality in the community. In many communities, the behavior which seems commonplace to the teacher may be outside the experience of students and parents. As one teacher stated the problem, "The fathers in our books always carry a brief case, but no child in my room has ever known a father who carried a brief case." Or, in the words of another, "We had a Halloween party in our junior high school class the other day and made place mats on which to serve. I had quite a time getting the students to understand what a place mat is, or how it is used."

The social
mores of
teachers and
students often
differ.

A teacher commented that students carried knives to school. When he had remonstrated with these students, they pointed out that they would not be safe if they did not carry knives. The gang warfare in the neighborhood which frequently made newspaper headlines indicated that the students were talking of a necessity not included in the teacher's experience. In a small community, everyone knows his neighbor. The school represents a geographical area in which people know each other and where standards of conduct are upheld by the community and reinforced by the school. The teacher who comes from a different community may find many customs alien to his own experience and background. In an urban community, few of the social mores are likely to be common in the several neighborhoods represented in the school. The teacher who expects his own mores to be understood and followed by the students may be penalizing the student who has the least opportunity to develop acceptable social standards. This expectation may serve to alienate the child rather than to educate him. The problem of the teacher is to help the underprivileged grow toward acceptable conduct without discriminating against them for holding the views common to their neighborhood. Where the school has the entire task of developing desirable conduct, the process will be slower and more gradual than where the school merely reinforces the training of the community. Supervisors and administrators assist in helping teachers to know and understand their school communities.

The schools in Baltimore, Maryland, have a teacher education program focused on knowing and understanding the

community. Labor and industrial leaders talk to teachers. Trips are made to factories, to social centers, to places of historical interest and to churches of various denominations. In the social centers, the teachers may participate in the program offered to those who attend regularly. In the churches, the ministers explain the faith and some of the religious traditions of their denominations. The course is focused on the immediate school community so teachers grow to know it well.

Teachers need induction into the mores of the community.

In America, the control of education by local elected authorities is a foundation-stone of our democracy. Schools are supported by local taxes, and representatives of the local community participate in making policies. One of the chief tasks of administrators is that of liaison between teachers and school board personnel.

In addition to the constituted authority of the school board, thousands of P.T.A.'s, mothers clubs, dads clubs, and, in ever-increasing numbers, citizens commissions, have become important policy-making groups. Some administrators and some teachers have become suspicious of the motives of a few overzealous citizens. Wherever teachers go, their every act seems to be the object of scrutiny. "I can no longer call my soul my own," is a plaint heard from many teachers. "I can't teach spelling as I believe it should be taught." "Every budget item is considered a raid on the public treasury."

Yet the schools exist for the benefit of the community. If the community is excluded, sooner or later the schools will cease to serve community interests; and the preparation of young people will then become remote from community reality. On the other hand, the educator has important professional knowledges. He is better informed about teaching methods and the ways children learn than are many lay persons. He has at hand a body of experience and research data about the learning process. It is his responsibility and privilege to apply this knowledge to the best of his ability.

Educators should apply scientific knowledge to develop schools that serve society.

He does not necessarily agree, therefore, with Mrs. Jones that his method of teaching fractions is wrong, or that reading should be taught according to the wishes of Mrs. Smith. Nor can he in all conscience accept the biased view of the economic world promoted by various special interest groups.

American
freedom
provides an
atmosphere for
improving
human welfare.

"America is promises," said a noted poet, "great promises, greatly achieved!" What has been accomplished in the short span of our national existence is an extraordinary testimonial to the power of the imagination. The American people have shown that freedom is possible and that it provides the most productive atmosphere for improving human welfare. Even with a record of such achievement, America can make still further progress. Educators are perhaps more conscious than are even the most captious critics, of the ways in which the American dream can be more fully realized.

Are children too young to face the problems of our world? Children today read the papers and magazines they find about the house; they listen to radio and television; they see newsreels. Many questions arise regarding information they do not understand. So they ask their teacher. The teacher can: (a) evade the answer and work on the spelling list; (b) give his personal answer; (c) present the point of view of one interest group; or (d) encourage children to find the facts and seek their own answers.

Teachers should
help pupils
search for
rational
solutions to
problems.

No matter which alternative the teacher selects, someone is bound to complain. In many localities, with wise educational leadership, teachers are encouraged to follow the American tradition of searching for rational solutions.

In review, it is an established characteristic of American life that the public schools belong to the community. Obviously, in the education of children, there needs to be a partnership of the public and the teaching profession. Faculties need to understand what the community is; they need to have the skills necessary for working with lay committees; and they need a clarification of the role of the professional educator in this relationship. Sociologists, as experts in this realm, could contribute as much to education as have psychologists. Furthermore, educators have an obligation to support the best of our American tradition. Curriculum committees should examine critically the content of education to see whether it fits the children, the community and the goals of American life. Parent participation in the life of the school and the use of parents in curriculum building provide a significant means for reaching the mutual objectives of community and school.

Educators Work Together To Solve These Problems

In looking at the teacher and the people with whom he works, many hazards have been discussed. The problems which teachers face as human beings in our culture have been described. The difficulties delineated are not insuperable, they are not unconquerable, nor are they new. A major block to their solution has been that educators have tended to accept these difficulties, to live with them and to leave them unsolved.

The problems identified here are not easy to resolve but certain ways of working are known to be productive. Today's teachers need to understand and accept the many facets of cultural differences in our society. They should see beyond their own culture shell if they are to avoid culture blindness. Sensitivity to their own cultural bias and to the influence of children's social backgrounds upon school learning may be accomplished in such ways as:

Teachers need to understand and accept the many facets of cultural differences.

Pre-service education in sociology. Courses that encourage direct community exploration—working with community youth agencies and interning in remote communities—as well as courses in sociological theory, are needed. In this way, beginning teachers can be helped to understand their own cultural bias. The analysis of significant personal values, of life rituals, of modes of etiquette and social exchange which are accepted or rejected or unknown is helpful in preparing teachers to work in many cultural backgrounds.

Community study and surveys. Many school systems conduct teachers through the community and periodically survey and study their communities. When this is coupled with a consideration of the teacher's background, the data studied have significant meanings for teachers.

Guided home visits. Through visits to the homes of his students the receptive teacher will learn a great deal about different ways of living. Home visits should, of course, be considered in their wider cultural context. Teachers should be helped to accept the ways different families live and work as part of their community. When teachers move too rapidly from one cultural environment into another, they may be surprised and shocked at the different ways of living they see. The supervisor can give support and understanding to teachers who face pupils and parents outside their range of previous experience. Materials, novels, autobiographies and motion pictures can help teachers identify themselves more closely with those who seem different.

Teachers must understand themselves if they are to understand children.

There are other ways of helping teachers understand and work with the many kinds of groups and cultures. Programs in intercultural education have given teachers new insights into what it means to children to be different. The supervisor who is sensitive to cultural bias in teachers and youngsters may also help build sociological understandings.

Teachers bring their home life and their personal history to school with them. In order to understand children, teachers must first understand themselves. Among means of accomplishing such an understanding are the following:

1. Aspects of this task can be undertaken in group discussions with teachers when administrators and supervisors make this a respectable topic for staff meetings. Young teachers in their first year or two of marriage might be encouraged to meet in small groups and with guidance explore the problems of teaching while at the same time maintaining a home and marriage relationship. Teachers who are mothers of young children could be given an opportunity to share their problems and solutions. Those who live with aging parents might eagerly greet the discussion of geriatrics by a specialist.

2. Through group discussion the way may be paved to help those teachers who face the need for personal counseling as a path to self-insight. School systems might consider providing psychiatric services for teachers just as child guidance centers are provided. Some school systems have opened the way to this service by utilizing Family Service Association personnel for group therapy.

3. Supervisors can help teachers to understand and accept their own reaction to individual children in the classroom.

4. Administrators and supervisors need to appraise the potency of faculty peer relationships. The benefits of findings of sociometry should not be limited to use with children. Faculty committees formed on the basis of sociometric choices might prove to be interesting and effective.

5. At different times in the life of the teacher different kinds of roles can best be undertaken in terms of his own developmental tasks. Supervisors can help a teacher to understand the kinds of professional participation that are constructive roles for him at particular times. Expectancies regarding organizations, curriculum committees and workshops for teachers will therefore vary according to the individual.

6. Supervisors have responsibility for understanding the present needs of individual teachers and for providing recognition for a

variety of abilities. One teacher may be encouraged to push out to new frontiers of classroom activity while another may be encouraged to stay with tried and true routines.

What children learn depends upon the experiences they bring to the learning situation and the ways in which teachers face and utilize children's motivations. Certainly the teacher who understands the *feelings* of children has better insight into child behavior. The following practices may help teachers gain better understanding of children's behavior:

Understanding children's feelings often gives insight into behavior.

1. Teachers should enter into a variety of informal relations with children *outside* the conventional routines of the school. Camping programs, youth clubs, community service organizations enable them to assume spontaneous and permissive roles in new relationships with children and youth.

2. Reconsideration should be given to the usual practice of assigning teachers to a grade placement with a new group of children each year. The yardstick for teacher assignment may well be the quality of relationship and growth being achieved by the association of a particular group of children with a particular teacher. This may mean for the teacher sometimes a one-year, sometimes a two-year assignment to a particular group of children.

3. A climate should be created in which a teacher can feel free to express his feelings about children and can receive the help of the administrator or supervisor in achieving a better understanding of children as well as a better insight into the teacher's reactions to certain children. Occasionally a child should be reassigned to someone whose personal history makes possible an acceptance of the behaviors involved.

4. Teachers' understanding of family or class values may be increased by faculty study of all the children in a specific family.

5. The teacher stereotype sometimes held by parents and children may be modified by planning social and work situations in which parents can know their children's teachers as *persons* like themselves rather than as teachers. The informality of picnics or work days (when everyone wears jeans) or of folk dancing contributes greatly to this objective.

6. Parent-teacher conferences build a realistic picture of a child's abilities and contribute to the acceptance of the child as a person. The conferences should be supplemented whenever possible by expert counseling for parents who are projecting their frustrations or ambitions upon their children. This suggestion implies a step beyond the parent-teacher conference—a parent counseling service—as an essential component of the evaluation program.

School personnel must learn to cope with institutional demands creatively.

Schools, like other institutions, need routines to ease the many demands made upon personnel. But routines can become ends in themselves. Teachers, administrators and supervisors need to develop a sophistication about the institutional demands placed upon them as individuals. They must learn to cope with such demands creatively. They should keep in mind that:

Faculties can be helped to work for "inclusiveness." This implies faculty teams which plan for the acceptance of new teachers and look at their own intra-group relations.

The development of school faculty morale involves being able to respond warmly and generously to the creative enthusiasm of the numerous new teachers every year, being able to value the uniqueness of the non-conformist, and being able to cherish the wisdom and experiences of the older staff members. Such morale develops where administrators and supervisors are concerned with *professional* rather than *personal* goals.

Administrators and supervisors can establish an open communication system in the places where school routines pinch. Through cooperative efforts and planning, the total faculty can solve such problems as use of instructional materials, schedules, attendance records, mimeographing of teaching materials, school drives and clerical services.

Role of the Supervisor

This chapter has pointed out that a good environment for learning demands that teachers face and resolve many and varied problems. Above all, it has shown that the supervisor has three important roles to perform if teachers are to succeed in their efforts.

Supervisors should help teachers resolve their immediate problems.

The first of these roles is working with teachers to help them resolve the problems that are of immediate concern to them. Often the supervisor may feel discouraged when demonstrations, workshops and opportunities for teachers to serve on curriculum committees have been provided and little of this effort has been translated into classroom practice. Why does this happen? It may be that the standards which have been held for teachers are so far removed from what is possible that they, in sheer self-defense, have said: "That's good theory, but it won't work!"

A high level of skill is required in order to analyze the school

problems which concern teachers most, and then to find the most acceptable place to start with a particular teacher or faculty in resolving these problems. Obviously, supervisors must know and use the findings of sociology, anthropology and psychology; it is important, however, that they use these understandings in relation to the problems of teachers rather than as a subject matter which teachers "need to know."

The second is helping teachers to understand themselves and the ways in which they relate themselves to children. Some supervisors have always worked from this viewpoint. They have recognized the personal factors in teachers' decisions, and have helped resolve the differences in value systems of children and teachers. If supervisors are to help teachers understand themselves better, they must go through the same processes of self-analysis that have been suggested for teachers. Those educational leaders who can constructively face problems within themselves are best able to work effectively with teachers. Certainly, a basic characteristic which a supervisor should acquire to serve this role well is that he recognize teachers as professional colleagues from whom he can learn much.

Finally, the third important role for the supervisor has to do with his interpretation of the educational program to administrators, other nonteaching school personnel, parents and lay citizens. Budgets and building programs should reflect the needs of the learning environment. If the public is to make intelligent decisions about the kind of schools it wants, it must have guidance from professional leadership in order to understand the requisites of a good learning environment. No one is in a better position to provide such educational leadership than a supervisor. The job is a difficult one but its importance lies in its very real challenge.

Supervisors need to be expert in human relationships.

Interpreting the requisites of a good learning environment to the public is a supervisory function.



Physical Resources Are Important

THE learning environment operates in its total impact on the individual. An attempt to describe ways of creating a good learning environment must be a faltering one, partly because there is much which we do not know, partly because every learning situation is different. But it is especially difficult because this environment does not consist of a series of isolated parts. At the same time that the physical environment is reinforcing or contradicting the attitudes toward school which have been learned at home, the student's relationship with his teacher or his schoolmates is altering the picture. Each individual finds it hard to say whether it was one thing or another which made him feel enthusiastic or reluctant about a task. As we describe the physical aspects of the learning environment, we ask the reader to be aware that these factors always operate in combination with personal relationships, and that failure or success in one may drastically alter the effectiveness of the others.

Therefore, in addition to the personal relationships described in the previous chapter, we need to study the physical features of the learning environment. We shall begin the study of physical features by imagining that we are walking into a school for the first time without any people around at all. We shall look at the building, the grounds, the rooms, the resources, and bring in people only as needed to highlight our discussion. It is our purpose in this section of the yearbook to consider the physical environment with an attitude of "What can we do about it?" We are well aware of the fact that no prescription can be written. We shall be content if we can raise questions which will help the reader look with new eyes at the learning environment in his own school.

The School Building Affects Learning

The child's first glimpse of the schoolhouse influences his attitude toward school.

The physical environment for learning begins for the child as he climbs down off the bus, or leaves his mother's car at the curb in front of the schoolhouse, or catches the first glimpse of the building as he walks toward it in the morning. What does he see as he approaches his school? Long lines of children waiting to get in, or an open door which welcomes him at any time? A gravel play yard without lawn or shrubs or flowers? A carefully landscaped yard where he must keep off the grass? Or a combination of beauty spots which are his because he helps to make them and to keep them? These may seem like little things; yet they go far in determining the attitude with which the child comes to the school, his eagerness or reluctance toward learning, and whether or not he feels welcome and wanted.

The interior of the school is no less important. What greets the student when he gets inside? Are the halls dark and official, or do they look as if children were expected to use them? Many old buildings give the impression of closing in on one—their stairways and extra spaces enclosed in steel netting, their hallways lined with rows of lockers, their bulletin boards coldly presenting formal exhibits.

The physical environment of the classroom often indicates the living that is going on.

Light paint in attractive pastels, use of extra corners as reading nooks, flowers or plants which children can care for and handle, bulletin boards which are changed often and really tell a story of what is going on from day to day—these may change the atmosphere completely. They create a feeling of welcome as one enters the door.

The Pepperdine School in Springfield, Missouri, was built in the days when schools were constructed with a huge rotunda in the center. There is much extra space in halls leading out from the center foyer, on the wide stair landings and in corners which could become dark and dismal. By making use of this space, this school has made its architecture an educational asset. Painted and cushioned benches have been placed on the landings, and the extra hall space is used for hobby or reading corners. These nooks make good work places for small committees, or serve as places of retreat for individuals who want to read alone when others are doing group



work in the classroom. One corner is furnished with an old round dining table, cut down and painted white. Plants abound, but they are not huge ferns and unchanging foliage plants alone; they are flowering plants, cared for by the children, and interesting because they grow rapidly and change their appearance. In the spring and fall, this school has a house cleaning day. Children come in jeans and old clothes and go over the entire school to get it ready for the school year in September, and in the spring clean it again before the vacation. The teachers and parents see this as an opportunity to teach care of property and to give the children a chance to make the school into the kind of place in which they feel at home. Parents and children have worked together to build the benches, paint the bookcases and do the other work necessary for making this school such a pleasant place in which to live and learn.

A rural school in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, has a similar atmosphere. It is a one-room school with old-fashioned desks fastened to the floor; but there are curtains at the win-

Parents and children can participate in making classrooms pleasant and attractive.



dows and a cut-down table with a rocking chair and a small rug at the back of the room. Children paint the windows at various seasons of the year. A plank bookcase runs the full length of the room, and a show table borders the other side of the room under the windows. A flower box has been made from the top of an old mechanical phonograph. The room looks homelike as one enters, even before the children arrive.

The physical environment gives clues about the school personnel's attitudes toward learning.

Mere physical environment can tell one about the total learning situation of the school and about the feelings of the people who work there. Is the door to the principal's office open for all to enter, or completely closed, or closely guarded by the secretary? Such details set an atmosphere conducive to eager learning or one of strain. Even on Saturday, when the corridors echo with emptiness, there is much that tells about the learning environment. Bulletin boards may display a monotonous sameness, an elaborate design to please adults, or a display of varied class activity. They give even a casual visitor a picture of the school program.

Teachers who complain bitterly about conduct and lack of manners of pupils may do well to ask whether the drabness



and institutional aspect of the entrance or of the lunchroom are designed to promote the niceties of social conduct. In the foyer of the Evanston Township High School, there is a huge fireplace with a decorative bench before it. On chill winter days, a fire burns briskly on the hearth, and the visitor is likely to find a small group of students gathered before it. This single physical feature goes far to say to students and visitors alike that this school is a comfortable place in which to stay.

In Clayton, Missouri, English classrooms are of paneled wood, and some have fireplaces which are used. It is easier to create an atmosphere conducive to literary study in such a room than in the regimented rows of seats that are typical of many English classrooms. But even without such luxuries, much can be done to make any room pleasing.

An old school building, like an old home, may become just as inviting and aesthetically appealing if the creative imagination of teachers and children is given free play. One needs to examine the room carefully and plan decoration and work space which will use its best features. Such planning is a valuable educational experience. Students frequently ask per-

Comfortable and attractive rooms facilitate learning.

The creative imagination of faculty and pupils can develop inviting atmosphere.

mission to decorate the cafeteria or set up picnic tables on a corner of the school grounds to improve the appearance of the school. One junior high school, whose students carry on a regular correspondence with a school in Holland, receives tulip bulbs every year from the Dutch school. The tulip bed made with these bulbs is an important part of the beauty and tradition of the school, and no tulip is ever picked by a thoughtless passer-by. In another junior high school, the new seventh grade plans and serves the lunch in the cafeteria for one day. For most of the new pupils in this junior high school, this is their first experience with eating food cooked in large quantities. By taking this responsibility, the seventh graders begin to understand and appreciate the service which is given them and the efforts of the cafeteria force to make the lunchroom attractive.

The Classroom Should Assist Learning

A classroom's physical features may reveal the human relationships which exist there.

Even more important than the general physical characteristics of the school are the characteristics of the individual classroom. What does it tell the student about the hours he is to spend there? What in the room welcomes students? What arouses curiosity? What gives evidence that this is a place where work is done, rather than a place simply for hearing recitations? What shows the student that he will have an opportunity for friendly interchange with his classmates? Even the position of the teacher's desk may tell much about what the student may expect. If it occupies an imposing place in the front of the room, one may expect the teacher himself to be the center of all activity.

Room arrangement generally indicates the teacher's philosophy of education.

One often hears the complaint that it is impossible to use group procedures or varied activities in an old schoolroom with desks fixed to the floor. The teacher who really wishes to use these procedures finds possibilities in almost any setting. Wallboard or plywood may be put across desks to make a large working space for assembling a committee report or painting a mural. Groups of four may be formed in a room with screwed-down desks, and four can work together readily in this seating arrangement. If there is any space at the front or back of the room, it can often be set up as an interest center.

Students of almost any age like to see a working model, or a hobby display, or a table of interesting reading material.

Ideally, of course, we should all like the opportunity to work in new, modern classrooms, with plenty of storage room, and space in which to move about easily. We should like to have light, movable, flexible furniture. The new trapezoidal tables seem ideal, for they can be used individually or fitted together to make a surface of almost any size or shape to suit the activity at hand. Some schools are being built today with a sink and work space for every room and a large storage closet suited to the needs of the class which will use that room.

Flexible furniture facilitates development of flexible teaching procedures.





The quality and diversity of books in a classroom may indicate teaching procedures.

Many Kinds of Materials Should Be Used

What books are on the shelves? Are they only sets of a single title or do they include sets of reference books? Are there many different books with different titles, different content? Are there books with many points of view, books for many interests, little books and big books, and books which are easy as well as those which are hard to read? Do the books on the shelves warn the child of rigid assignments ahead, or do they invite him to seek learning? No child becomes a reader by reading textbooks alone. His reading must be wide and varied.

And the bulletin boards—what do they say of the work in the room? They are even more important in the room than in the hall. Do they show the interests, concerns and achievements of the students? Or do they give evidence that everyone in the group must do the same assignment, but that only the best will be put on display? Are they filled primarily with mimeographed bulletins from the office? Do they speak only of things which have already happened in the class, or do they also have some place for bringing in new ideas and anticipating

things to come? Are they used to make statistics meaningful through the use of charts, graphs and pictographs? Do they serve as an additional means of communication for committees in the class? Bulletin boards can be an important part of the learning environment.

And what of materials other than reading? Are there living animals and plants in the biology room? Does the fifth grade have number games which may make arithmetic meaningful? Can the room be darkened for film showings? Are there maps and globes with which to satisfy curiosity about the places of the world? Are there tempera and brown paper, scissors and paste, or other simple equipment which indicates that there are many ways of working?

The mathematics exhibit at East High School in Denver has gained national fame. More important than the exhibit, however, is the mathematics room where much of the work is done. Students who are not enrolled in mathematics wander into the room to see what is going on or what new things have been added. Shelves, window ledges, blackboard sills, and even wires suspended from the ceiling offer figures or displays which have a mathematical meaning. This room stimulates the desire to learn. These mathematics materials were not purchased by means of a school budget. They were made by students. Often the limitations of the school budget are used as an excuse for meager learning materials and learning experiences. A creative faculty or creative teacher can find many ways to develop materials for teaching.

Materials made by teachers and pupils may have great value. Their cost is slight, and their interest-quality, high. They are frequently more suited to immediate needs than materials prepared for general use. One sixth-grade class made a large book for the kindergarten showing how their new school had been built. The book provided good experience for both groups, and the need for preparing a clear explanation for the younger children helped the sixth graders learn to express themselves simply and vividly. Many schools prepare handbooks for incoming freshmen. These guides may well be written by each class for its successors. Whether the handbook is printed, or only mimeographed, it is prepared with

Bulletin boards should communicate the interests, concerns and achievements of pupils.

Teaching materials which stimulate a desire to learn should be selected.

Immediate and individual needs can often be met by teacher- and pupil-made materials.

the knowledge that it will be used. One school developed a book on etiquette which was used to show what students expected of each other in social ways. These activities are meaningful and increase the resources for the group making the preparation as well as for the group which receives it.

Slides and filmstrips can be made by students. Maps, historical accounts of specific topics, and interviews with informed persons may all be worked into a form which has permanent resource value. Recordings of radio programs, of speeches given by students, or of carefully planned interviews may be used as permanent resource material.

The Community Provides an Environment for Learning

The community
is a vast
resource for
learning.

The community itself is a vast resource for learning. A walk around the schoolhouse block to look for unusual color in the trunks of trees or in stretches of green grass may be valuable for an art class. Search for insects may be time well spent for either elementary children or secondary school biology students. A teacher in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, developed a classroom museum of leaves and insect life which he and his students collected. A teacher with his class may plot a "nature walk" for any community and develop a guide for use with it. The schools of Portland, Oregon, have a questionnaire which they give to students to see how familiar they are with well-known local places or phenomena.

In Fair Lawn, New Jersey, a committee of parents and teachers listed all the business firms, museums and other places in the community which were of educational value for field trips. Members of the committee visited each place personally in order to learn its educational possibilities. A sixth-grade class in the same community wrote a pamphlet describing animals which could be borrowed from a local zoo.

Vital curriculum
experiences
require constant
search for new
information.

The range of resources and materials used will be rich if the teacher and students together are constantly searching for new sources of information in their immediate day-to-day contacts. The daily newspaper may yield a dozen articles which are pertinent to the curriculum of any class, if the teacher and the group are searching for such articles. Direct experiences



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are more vivid than vicarious ones, but vicarious ones are effective when they are directly applicable to the concerns of the moment, especially if these are related to the community.

Audio-Visual Materials Are Valuable in Instruction

The use of any kind of photographic equipment can become a valuable part of the school environment. Children can learn to take pictures and to develop them in order to tell effectively the story of their activities. Parents and teachers can work with them to picture the story of the school or of the community.

Films, slides and film strips are essential materials for effective education. The problem is to have these resources available for the right class at the right time. Films cannot be used most effectively if they must be ordered a year in ad-

**Pertinent
audio-visual
materials are
essential to a
good learning
environment.**

vance. Schools which rely on the use of free films alone are limited in what they can do. Also, free films may contain excessive advertising or propaganda and thus place the schools in the undesirable position of promoting certain products, organizations or beliefs.

Audio-visual materials serve many purposes and can be used in many ways.

In one eighth-grade class in Battle Creek, Michigan, teachers questioned the procedure of showing every child in a class the same film. Every child in a class does not necessarily read the same book. In a unit on vocations in the eighth grade, teachers scheduled the usual series of films, but arranged to show these only to those students concerned. The students interested in nursing saw the film on nursing; those who wanted to enter a trade saw films on bricklaying or plumbing. Other students used books or pamphlets that seemed more appropriate than the film for their own particular purposes.

Tape recordings can be utilized for evaluation purposes.

The use of tape recorders has many possibilities. Recordings help give the group an opportunity to evaluate what is done and to find better ways of working together. They help students become conscious of voice and expression. They lend variety to the sharing of information. One class in Wayne, Michigan, had two monitors who voluntarily arrived at school an hour early to tape-record an educational radio program pertinent to their class work. The recording was played for the class at the regular hour.

Radio and television activities must be considered in planning learning experiences.

No consideration of the physical setting for learning today is complete without including radio and television, which is rapidly becoming a part of the learning environment for most children, especially in metropolitan centers. What does television mean for the teacher as he strives to create a learning environment? Some school systems are providing regular school broadcasts and telecasts of their own. Philadelphia, for example, has a school-time telecast every day at a time convenient for classroom work. More important for the teacher, however, are the programs which the child sees during out-of-school hours. For example, the science teacher cannot afford to ignore the concepts of science which children are getting through watching the televised adventures of a space hero or through hearing a carefully planned program from a museum. Educational radio and television programs are being

developed in university centers and on the major networks. Many of these programs illustrate excellent teaching procedures. Good literature, good music, good history, good science programs are available if the teacher is aware of what they offer. Certainly the broadcasts and telecasts of such events as the presidential inauguration and the civil defense tests related to the atomic explosions mark a significant type of educational program. The technical telecasts carried on prior to such events now provide as many opportunities for learning as the event itself. Programs such as these should be used in schools for their real educational values.

The Assembly Room Should Be Used for Learning

And what of the auditorium or assembly area within the school? Are assembly activities a part of the educational planning? Does the child think of the assembly as an escape? As a bore? As a lecture hall? What is the purpose of the assembly program? Does it bring important educational experiences to the group: experiences which could not be provided through the individual class? Does it give all students a chance to appear and to develop the needed poise for such situations? Are the activities and the planning designed to create a group feeling within the school? Are many types of programs offered or is entertainment the sole purpose?

Through the accident of having no assembly room many elementary schools plan ways in which one class shares its activities with another even though no more than two classes can get together. Perhaps such a plan would be of value in secondary schools as a supplement to large assemblies. Certainly more students could participate in most assembly programs. Simple stage settings can be constructed from corrugated paper or brown wrapping paper. Cardboard boxes can serve as flats. The assembly offers many unique possibilities for student growth. Among these are town hall meetings illustrating the work of the student council, forum discussions on national and international issues, and opportunities to hear artists or speakers of outstanding ability. Whatever is planned should be judged by its content and by the opportunity afforded students for participation.

Assemblies offer unique possibilities for pupil experience and growth.



Individual differences and purposes in learning should be considered when selecting learning materials.

Materials Should Be Selected for Many Purposes

A good learning environment should provide many different materials which can help develop understandings, attitudes and skills. Materials should be provided to encourage young people to ask questions, to reach out for information, to develop interests which are new to them. Regarding any classroom, we may ask ourselves such questions as, "What materials are here which will make Mary, the outstanding student, and John, the very slow reader, both reach out for information? What is there in this classroom which points the way to the future?"

To determine the responses of students to their learning environment requires the use of a variety of materials. More materials need to be devised to serve this purpose. When a class is to be in a room for a period of a full semester or a year, its members should think of ways to make it a place in which they will like to be. Their proposals and suggestions may reveal important reactions to the environment. This information may be obtained through questionnaires which ask students to indicate what they would like to change about

their school or their class and what they like best about it as it is. This same set of responses gives a good opportunity to discover students' frank attitudes and feelings. Youth inventories and personality tests may also reflect reactions to the environment.

Also, means of assessing what the student brings to the school setting are important. The work of various organizations studying human relations are of value to teachers for determining attitudes and prejudices. Films which encourage discussion reveal attitudes and prejudices which the student brings into the environment with him. Films dealing with youth problems are another means of assessing the attitudes and problems of students. Discussion of field trips and news items may also be used to reveal what students know prior to their study of a topic.

Materials should be designed to help students learn to face problems and to think them through. One of the most distinguishing features of our American culture is the skill shown in facing and solving industrial problems. The same degree of skill might advantageously be applied to other problems. Adults must constantly and persistently use problem-solving in resolving political issues and in making personal decisions. Ability to use the scientific method and to think for oneself is the basis for effective citizenship. The students who are the adults of tomorrow need materials which give opportunity for careful, precise and scientific analysis of all kinds of problems. Materials for problem solving should be a part of the equipment of every classroom. All real problems present issues that are controversial. It is important that the materials selected represent all sides of an issue, whether the issue used may be a labor-management problem, an election, a dispute between classroom groups, or even a personal problem such as the proper time to get home from a date. The purpose of such a wide selection of materials is to assist students as they learn how to analyze conflicting statements for facts and opinions. Claims of both labor and management made in the newspaper, speakers representing both political parties, spokesmen for both sides in a playground dispute, a parent and student panel to discuss teen-age hours may all be con-

Materials should be designed which help pupils face and solve problems.

Materials which stimulate creative effort should be selected.

sidered resources for instruction. From the physical point of view there should be books, pamphlets, films, current magazines and newspapers to furnish information on controversial issues.

Materials and equipment for developing appreciation and creative expression should be a part of the classroom facilities. Records, art materials, science materials, recording machines, a wardrobe closet—all are useful in promoting creative activity.

Good Administration Facilitates Use of Resources

Teacher ingenuity can improve physical conditions.

It would be a mistake, in considering the physical environment for learning, to fail to examine some of the conditions which make it difficult for the teacher to use the physical environment effectively. If the teacher moves from room to room during the day or meets a class only twice a week, much ingenuity is required to make good use of the room and of a variety of materials.

Building regulations should be developed cooperatively.

Regulations regarding the hanging of draperies or pictures should be worked out cooperatively to encourage the development of an attractive room. An excessive number of blackboards with minimum bulletin board space poses another problem. Anyone who is really concerned can find a solution. A loose strip of wallboard or plywood, which can be moved from room to room or put up and taken down when necessary, will add bulletin board space and increase flexibility of its use. In one New York city school, where teachers frequently must move from one room to another, a squad of students is trained to work with each department in order to deliver to the room the special resources which may be needed by the class at any given period. The teacher requests the materials; these are brought to the room at the beginning of the hour, collected at the end.

Administrative and supervisory help facilitates the development of a creative learning environment.

Although nails and scotch tape are undesirable for putting materials on walls and blackboards, masking tape, which comes off walls readily without destroying the paint, may be used. The motif of decorative murals can be drawn from the classwork—a portrayal of scenes from stories that are read, the account of a trip, a combination of assorted punctuation marks, or the story of the splitting of the atom. Parents can



often be enlisted to assist in making the school attractive. Administrative and supervisory help can facilitate the teacher's efforts to use the environment creatively.

A Materials Center Is an Aid to the Learning Environment

Many materials to improve the learning environment need to be readily available. Often there is no place for storing these materials in the classroom.

The materials center in the public schools of Portland, Oregon, has become known nation-wide for its usefulness to teachers. This is purely a service center. It is a place for many kinds of equipment and materials—films and filmstrips, dioramas made in various schools, maps and charts, pamphlets, books, records, pictures, odds and ends of electrical equipment, pieces of cloth, oatmeal boxes. Almost anything which a teacher may want to use in a classroom has found its way to the center. There it is put in labeled boxes for future use or arranged on shelves under special topics. Anyone may look through the boxes, read the labels or inspect the shelves to find teaching materials.

A school district materials center can provide adequate and readily available materials.

The Manhasset, Long Island, New York Public Schools are also developing a materials center. A teacher sends in a request for resources on a topic soon to be studied by his class. Whether it is transportation, space travel, weather, physiology, or information about great men, the personnel of their materials center gather together every kind of learning aid available on the topic and send it to the teacher. The teacher and his students examine the material they receive and send back what they do not want to use. Here again is a materials center which is becoming popular with teachers.

Teachers need
to examine
and become
familiar with
teaching
materials.

In both these instances many different kinds of media are assembled, so that the teacher does not have to run from one place to another to find teaching aids. Teachers are given a chance to handle and look at the materials rather than to approach them through a card catalog. As a teacher looks for resources, he may find many appropriate to the interests of his students which would never be listed under the topic in a catalog. A topic may be approached from many points of view, and often the most pertinent aids do not lend themselves to classification in the card catalog. Instructional tools for both teachers and children should be readily available for examination as well as for use in the classroom.

One of the major problems of such materials centers is that of planning the discard as well as the acquisition of aids. Discarding is essential. A practice which seems to be quite practical is to check the use of materials, to encourage use of those which lie idle, and to discard any which have not been used for a two-year period.

Effective means of calling the attention of teachers to the materials is a problem. Apparently mimeographed bulletins alone do not really succeed in this. Portland has a plan that works. As new materials are added to the center, a mimeographed notice is sent to teachers. At the beginning of each school year a complete catalog of materials is sent out. Teachers give a quick glance at the brief bulletin and discard or file it, but always have the large catalog to turn to for reference. Studying the catalog at leisure and examining the materials have been found to stimulate their use more effectively than mere reading of the bulletin alone.

There are many administrative and supervisory problems related to the establishment and use of a central collection of materials. The collection must be housed in a central place, adequate for a wide variety of teaching aids. Storage places for boxes, and space for books and science equipment are needed. Participation by teachers in selecting materials for purchase is also very important. Every teacher who examines and selects has a vested interest in using materials and in informing his fellow teachers. Also, the materials thus selected will more nearly meet teacher needs. Rotating committees working for an academic year may take full responsibility for evaluating and reviewing materials. It is well to have these committees representative so that their members will be aware of the needs and interests of their associates.

Requisitioning materials from the central office should be a simple procedure. Teachers may not generally bother with a requisition which has to be signed in triplicate, or sent through several administrative offices. They will use facilities more frequently if a simple request, either by phone or requisition, can make the material available immediately.

The proper use of films always presents a serious problem. It is better not to teach with a film at all than to use it when it is unrelated to class activity. Yet in many school systems, films must be ordered a year in advance. The teacher must either keep his program rigidly scheduled in order to use the film at the appropriate time, or must show the film regardless of its timeliness. If rental films are the only source, it is difficult to avoid this. Many school systems are developing their own school libraries of the most valuable standard films suitable for their curriculum.

Film previews present another administrative problem, especially in the larger districts. Some school systems have a preview period at a regularly scheduled time with an announcement as to what films are to be previewed. The schedule might place social studies films on one day, science on another, elementary school material on another. Plans would have to be made, however, in relation to needs of the school system and to other types of teacher meetings. Some schools have a preview period at the beginning of each school day

Teachers should participate in evaluating and selecting materials.

To insure use, a materials center must have simple lending procedures.

Pupils should be partners in previewing and using films.

for any films which are to be shown that day. Thus, if a teacher is to use a film on Thursday, he knows that a member of the audio-visual squad will provide a preview of that film at a particular time on that day.

The use of films can be facilitated by training students as an audio-visual squad. This training increases student interest in the use of materials, and increases the flexibility of the program. Student squads can be effective for this purpose in elementary schools as well as in secondary schools.

Field Trips Can Be Facilitated

Arrangements for field trips, including the scheduling of classes, should be considered by the administrative and supervisory staffs. Does the school carry insurance to cover physical risk on a field trip? Are buses easily available? Has adequate information been provided for teachers who wish to use community resources—information about places to go, purposes to be achieved, people to call, ways of getting trans-





portation? Many teachers hesitate to use field experiences or audio-visual equipment because so much time and trouble are involved in making necessary arrangements. To encourage teachers in creating a good learning environment one must find ways of making it easy and practical for them to utilize a wide variety of resources.

Field trips are fairly simple for the elementary school if such details are arranged. But the secondary school has a more complex problem because of departmentalization. Yet there are many ways to make a secondary program flexible. One way is to arrange classes for double periods on alternate days. Another is block scheduling so that a particular group is kept together for one half of the school day. Thus in one school, students are kept together for three classes: English, social studies and science. These three teachers can arrange desirable field experiences for the group. Some such cooperative effort can help make field experiences a part of the secondary program. Schools with a core organization meet this problem to some extent through the "core class." The secondary school schedule must provide for flexibility of experience if the sec-

**Flexible
schedules
encourage field
trips.**



ondary school is to succeed in making more effective use of the community environment.

New Buildings Should Be Planned Cooperatively

Teachers' experiences are valuable in the cooperative planning of school buildings.

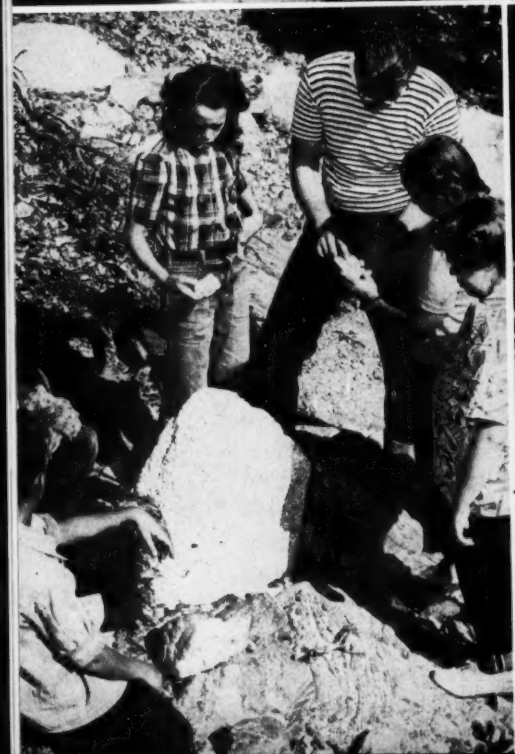
In these days of increasing school population, more new school buildings are rising than at any time since the 1920's. A new emphasis on the relationship between the school architecture and the instructional program is being developed. Committees of teachers, parents, students, administrators and supervisors are helping in the planning of many new buildings. The teacher is having a chance to plan features which improve the learning environment for children—doors leading directly to play areas for elementary schools; running water, storage space and shelf work-space for all types of rooms; bulletin boards where they are needed; dark curtains for film showings; planting areas for science rooms; classroom library space. All such features are being incorporated in order to make the buildings contribute more effectively to the educational program.

Physical Resources Are Important

This chapter has described the physical aspects of the learning environment. It has dealt with the obvious, the essential, but even these things are sometimes overlooked or neglected. The importance of the physical environment for learning cannot be overemphasized. Anyone who has lived in a drab, confined space; anyone who has lived with wallpaper which he actively disliked; anyone who realizes that he likes or dislikes certain colors or pictures or food because of his early experience with these things testifies to the importance of environment in learning. While places and things are not an end in themselves in the learning process, they are important aids to learning. The teacher, the supervisor and the administrator must ask themselves repeatedly: Is the physical setting in harmony with the objectives of the program? How do students respond to it? Does it foster a love of beauty, a spirit of exploration? Does it encourage flexibility? Does it generate interest in many different things? Does it provide for many approaches to learning? Are difficulties of using a wide variety of materials kept at a minimum? Do conditions facilitate rather than hinder educational use of the building and its facilities? These questions need to be considered regularly if the physical setting is to be a constructive and creative part of the learning environment.

The obvious and essential are often neglected in the learning environment.

The school environment should be in harmony with the educational objectives of the community.



Learning Experiences Are Important

Effective Learning Requires Both Knowledge and Action

THE system of free public education in America has steadily been expanded to include the children of all the people. Citizens in general have accepted the principle that children five years and older should be educated at public expense, and that public education should be continuously offered throughout adulthood. Realization that education is essential to the survival of a self-governing people has given impetus to the continued expansion of educational opportunity. The citizen of a democracy must understand the problems and issues of his time, their roots in the past and their significance for the future. He must be able to provide for himself and his family and to participate in the economy of his society. Each individual must develop attitudes which free him to work harmoniously with his fellows, to respect their rights and needs, and to assume his responsibilities toward others. From kindergarten through college, public education provides for the continuous growth of children and youth in the understandings, skills and attitudes which are essential to participation in a democratic society. The nature of child growth determines the selection and sequence of experiences through which these outcomes are realized.

The American citizen needs to understand his community, his country and the world. In order to develop these understandings, each child must acquire knowledge about man's historical background; about scientific methods and findings; and about production, communication and transportation. He must know about the institutions of society and the provision for government through constitutions, charters and

laws. He must become acquainted with the expression of man's enduring values in literature and the arts. Children develop these understandings, not alone from memorization and reading, but from generalizing about many problems of daily living.

To gain these understandings, children learn and practice many skills which enable them to extend information independently. New methods of communication demand greater skill in speaking clearly, listening critically, writing vividly and effectively, and reading analytically. These are not mere mechanical skills, but involve techniques of relating and organizing ideas, drawing tentative hypotheses and testing conclusions.

In a mechanical and scientific age, skills of quantitative thinking are imperative. The fundamental arithmetical processes are not enough. The problems of modern living demand increased perception of quantitative relationships. All people need insight into the use of budgets, installment buying and interest, the risks and returns of investments; and familiarity with many measures of speed, time and distance. Specialization has increased the number of vocations in which a high degree of proficiency in quantitative skills is required.

Mechanization has produced a host of new machines that all people may need to use. The skills of using and caring for automobiles, washing-machines, stoves, typewriters and other appliances must be taught. Man is increasingly called upon to deal with the concrete and mechanical. Schools of today, therefore, must not be limited to linguistic and abstract learning. They must provide children with many opportunities to become familiar with and adept in handling a variety of materials and tools.

Increased population and development of metropolitan centers demand new skills in working with groups of people. Vocational success depends as much upon skills of cooperation and leadership as upon technical knowledge. Participation in community activities requires ability to help groups clarify purposes and channel their energies.

One of the major objectives of education is the building of attitudes and values consistent with the American way of



life. It is the school's obligation to help children develop feelings of self-respect, responsibility and acceptance of people different from themselves. The attitudes and values to be developed influence the content of education and determine the methods of teaching. Children learn self-direction and mutual respect as they practice democracy in their classrooms.

Experience Is the Best Teacher

All human beings learn through experience. As children obtain perceptual impressions of the world about them, they learn to symbolize these in gesture and language. Through this symbolization they communicate with others and share vicariously the experiences of others. They are able also to summarize their experiences, to note similarities and differences, to see cause and effect relationships, and to draw conclusions. These conclusions or generalizations serve as guides to action and are tested and revised in the light of further experience. Thus, learning is based upon experience and is going on continuously. All learning from infancy to adulthood follows this process, endlessly repeated.

The symbols through which the thoughts and experiences of mankind have been expressed, conveyed and recorded are extremely valuable in learning. Sometimes, however, schools have been concerned only with the symbols. In the past, too much school learning has been centered upon this step of

Learning is based on experience and is continuous.

symbolization; the experiences which give symbols meaning have been neglected, and the steps of generalizing and applying to life situations have been omitted.

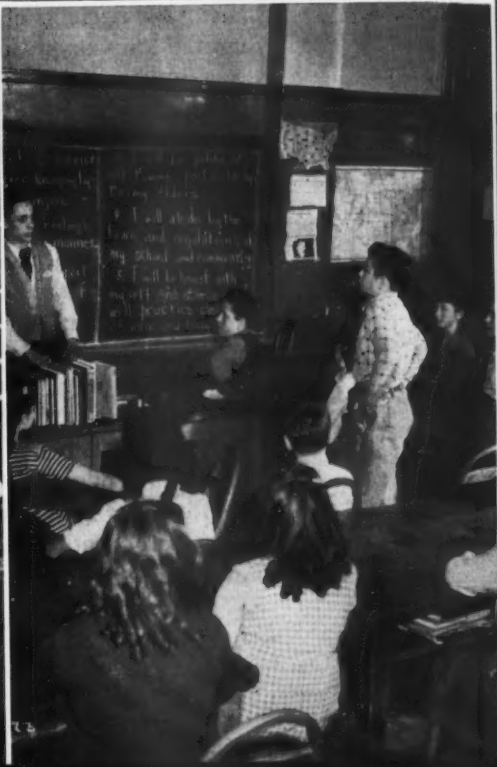
School
experience
should provide
learnings
essential to
effective living.

Although learning comes from experience, the teacher has a major responsibility in planning and guiding the school experiences of children and in helping them to recognize "lessons" which may be applied to new situations they will meet in the future. The child is continuously learning; school is only a segment of his life. He is gaining knowledge and understanding, skills and attitudes in all his activities throughout the day. However, school life at its best can provide the kinds of experiences and the wise guidance of learning which will contribute to the development of sound understandings, effective skills and constructive attitudes for effective living in all its phases.

Past Experiences Affect Learning

Experiences are the result of all the people, the situations and the activities with which children come in contact. The time a youngster spends with the gang, the thrill he feels when the bat hits the ball, the games he invents as he plays





around the foundation of the new house, his desolation when he is scolded for getting his feet wet, his awareness of the soft, moist coolness of the grass when he goes barefoot—these are all experiences. They constitute a part of the background which children bring to the classroom and on which they build their learning.

The pupil's
reaction to the
environment
conditions his
learning.

The boy who has sandlot baseball in his background and the one who has the gang on the crowded city street might learn different human relationships. The sense of duty of the boy who feeds the chickens, drives a tractor, has a paper route or works at a filling station might be quite different from that of the boy who has never assumed home tasks or held a regular job. Even with similar activities, the experiences of individuals are different. Experiences are colored by interaction with friends, relationship with brothers and sisters and the sense of security and love which one carries within himself.

All the reactions to the people, places and learning materials in the environment condition learning. The better we understand these reactions, the better the learning environment we can create. The purpose of this chapter is to consider some of the elements of experiences planned in and resulting from the learning environment.

The teacher must find ways of knowing what each child's experiences have been in order to determine what new activities should be planned. What have previous school experiences meant? What have been the child's problems? What have been his achievements? Even before the class has begun, the teacher can learn a great deal about each child through studying his cumulative record.

The average class will show a range of three to five years' difference in reading achievement. The teacher can identify from the records those children who will need simple reading materials and those who will need more difficult material of similar content. In the elementary school, the teacher must think of resources for all the activities of the day as well as for all levels of reading ability in each activity. If the cumulative record includes hobbies and titles of books read, the teacher can begin to identify the interests of the group. He can then provide books and equipment related to those interests cover-

ing the range of reading ability indicated by the records.

Statements of particular difficulties and outstanding talents of children are to be found on many cumulative records. The difficulties indicate which children have not had a happy school experience and need reassurance and a sense of achievement. The special talents give a basis for planning activities which will develop the gifts of all members of the group. Attendance records give evidence of the health of the children and the responsibility of the parents toward their children's school attendance. The class with high academic and attendance records will probably be receptive to almost any school activity. Conversely, if the attendance records show frequent absences or trancies, sporadic interest and resistance to uninteresting school routines may be expected.

In order for the physical environment of the classroom to stimulate learning, the teacher should use clues given in the cumulative records. For those children who are mechanically inclined, special opportunities to make things should be provided; for those with a scientific inclination more opportunities to experiment should be offered; for those who have an interest in art, there should be many different media from which to choose ways of expressing themselves. Suggestions for activity should be evident in the room when the children first arrive. The cumulative records will frequently reveal activities which have already been tried; such activities would provide something familiar for children as they enter the new class. Records also show gaps in children's experiences and thus suggest activities which may offer the challenge of exploration.

From a careful study of the cumulative records, the teacher will gain many leads for preliminary planning. The following list of questions may serve as a guide for the study of records:

1. What general problems and interests are found in this group?
2. What kinds of previous experience have the students had which might relate to this class?
3. Is the emotional or social development of some group members likely to aid or hinder the work of the class?

But cumulative records, helpful as they may be, give only

Teachers gain insight about individual children partly through school records.

Effective preliminary planning of instruction necessitates information about individuals and the group.

an indication of the students' past experiences. The teacher also considers the characteristics of age level and the cultural background of the group for which he is planning. He will learn more about the students as he works with them. This new information makes for continuous planning and evaluation.

In a Good Learning Environment the Student Should Feel Liked and Needed

Does the child entering the new school or the new class find activities which welcome him, challenge him, make him feel comfortable and at ease? Kindergarten and first-grade teachers have long been aware of the need for a diversity of activities for young children. Meetings in which parents are given suggestions for introducing young children to school are a common part of many kindergarten and first-grade programs. But what of the student who leaves the elementary school for the junior high school? Or the student who moves from the junior high school to the senior high school? Or the student within the school who moves to a new class? Each of these changes demands an adjustment to new circumstances. The ease or difficulty of this adjustment depends upon the individual himself and the learning environment.

The environment
should help
individuals
adjust to new
circumstances.

In a good learning environment, the child is accepted by both teachers and students. The child is secure in knowing that he can do what will be expected of him. This sense of acceptance and security in one's own competence is achieved in many ways. Many schools are using various kinds of inter-class activities to help children in school adjustment. Sixth-grade children help first graders with reading. Student councils include children of all ages and help children learn school rules and ethical conduct. Some schools are trying out inter-age class groups in order that both older and younger children may learn by helping each other. By helping children become acquainted with different teachers and with many children of varying ages, these activities break down barriers between grades and rooms.

In the secondary school, similar efforts are often made. One class invites another for a special performance of a play,

a fashion show, an art exhibit or a science demonstration. Science and social studies classes work separately on a study of atomic power and its effects on living, and then they exchange information. Seniors talk with new students about the rules and privileges of their school. Many secondary schools bring the elementary school graduates to visit the high school classes in the spring. Sometimes a high school teacher or counselor visits the elementary school to get acquainted and to see what children are accustomed to in the elementary or junior high school. In this visit the teacher learns which children have special difficulties or special interests, and which ones will need special responsibilities and opportunities if they are not to become discouraged. Plans are then made for bridging the gap between the schools and for keeping close contact with those young people who are most in need of such attention. These experiences are planned to give students a sense of belonging and of being welcome in the new environment.

The deepest satisfactions, however, develop from projects in which every student in the class feels himself involved. Some schools plan for such responsibilities early in the school year. The new class in the junior or senior high school gives its own party for its members. Planning may be a part of actual class work—the program and announcements in the English class, the collection and expenditure of money in mathematics, the refreshments in home economics or the games in physical education. The experience of planning and carrying out such activities does much to unify a group and give it a sense of membership in the school.

Pupils in every grade need to assume genuine responsibility. One group of teachers aware of this need promised themselves that they would not assume responsibility for carrying on any portion of the school program which might profitably be undertaken by the students. They enumerated the tasks which would be of value to students. Collecting and keeping accounts for the milk money, ordering and planning menus for the school lunch room, keeping the attendance percentages, selecting and ordering new books for classroom libraries, planning for American Education Week,

Inter-visitation between school levels by teachers and pupils aids articulation.

The school environment should motivate pupils to take responsibility.

writing news items for the local papers, choosing pictures for the school exhibit, welcoming new students to the school and inviting their parents to visit, calling students who are ill—these and many other tasks were on the teachers' list. They knew, however, that assigning these tasks to students would not insure that the students would feel that the jobs were theirs. The students might feel that they were "doing something for the teacher," rather than assuming their share of responsibility for *their* school. The student council in this school met this problem very wisely. It identified these tasks—and in much the same way the teachers had planned among themselves: What are the jobs to be done in our school? Who should do them? When can they be done? Will they take more time than we should spend on them? As a result of these two simultaneous studies, students assumed many responsibilities which were of value to them.

Some teachers hesitate to give students such a responsibility as that of handling money, for fear they will make errors. In these teachers' minds, the importance of the job outweighs its educational value. If such tasks are given to students, they are given only to the most reliable or to the best mathematician. Yet the responsibility of producing an accurate account may be the very motivation needed for the student who lags in arithmetic or is careless about records. The good educational environment provides ways to capitalize upon mistakes made in the process of learning. It does not reserve opportunities for those who no longer need them because such students already have the required skills. Such responsibilities should be opportunities for all, not reserved for those who are already responsible.

Sometimes, it is a group which needs more responsibility. Teachers from several different junior high schools were working together on curriculum problems. The eighth grade was under discussion. Teachers bemoaned the fact that although the seventh-grade pupils were quite obedient and the ninth graders responsible, the eighth-grade pupils were a problem. The teachers assumed that it must be their "age." One more year of development and they would become responsible students. One member of the committee remained silent for



a long while as he listened to these conclusions. Finally he spoke:

"I've been wondering why the eighth graders in my school seem to be so different from those you describe," he said. "Now I think I know the reason. We don't have a ninth grade, so our eighth graders take all the responsibilities which your ninth graders take. They are just as responsible as you describe your ninth graders to be. Perhaps it isn't their age that matters. It's whether or not you give them any real responsibilities."

The others were startled, for as he spoke they realized that the eighth grade had become a "no man's land," and that the pupils' apparent irresponsibility was really a protest. In most of the schools, no important or prestige-yielding activities were carried on by eighth graders.

Status Patterns Are a Part of the Learning Environment

In another junior high school, the teachers were well-satisfied with the broad scope of the activity program. A questionnaire was sent to students by the student council

asking how the school could be improved. Results of the survey showed that seventh and eighth graders were almost unanimous in asking for more opportunities to participate in school activities.

Although teachers had planned activities in which everyone could participate, the students themselves did not place much value on some of the activities offered. No one really cared about being the chairman or the secretary of a homeroom group. Although everyone liked to be in the operetta, the need to be important and to be recognized was not always satisfied by being a member of a chorus that numbered three hundred. These activities were enjoyed, but the responsibilities which the students considered of real importance were reserved for the ninth-grade classes. The staff of the newspaper, the safety council, the announcer at the public-address system, the office messengers—these were rewards for older students. The results of this questionnaire were used to re-allocate opportunities for school service and to develop other activities which would be equal in responsibility. Instead of having the student president make all announcements, students took turns at the public-address system. The safety council was made an all-school responsibility. A school store was opened by the seventh-grade students. Reports for the city newspapers became the responsibility of the eighth grade. The student council took over the planning. As one student said, "We worked terribly hard, but it was our own, so we didn't mind."

The environment
should offer
many
opportunities
to gain status
with peers.

This opportunity to gain status in the eyes of their classmates is one of the most important features of the learning environment. Status plays an important part in learning. Louis Rath¹ of the School of Education, New York University, has identified six kinds of status important to students in the upper elementary and junior high school.

1. The first is affectional status—acceptance by those who are important to the individual. In the elementary school, this may mean adult approval. In the secondary school, it depends largely upon approval of age-mates, especially of the opposite sex.

¹ In a conversation discussing work in progress.

2. Social class is also an important kind of status and often determines the cliques within the school, the dating pattern, or the candidates for office. Unless the school program is carefully planned, those who do not belong in the highest socio-economic group have little opportunity to assume responsibilities or take part in the social life of the school.

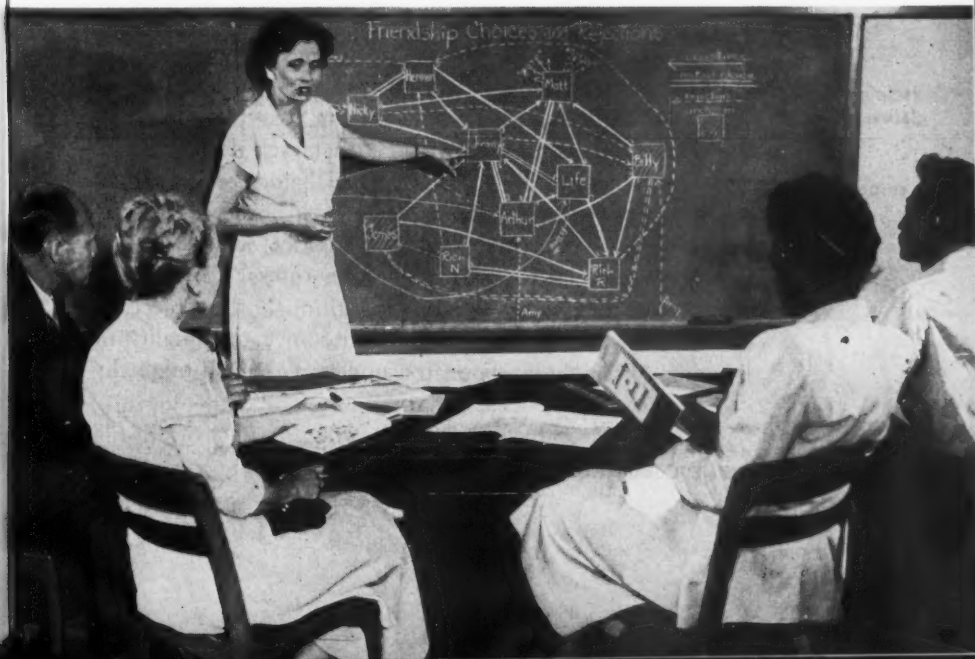
3. Another type of status important in the school is that which comes from special accomplishments: academic achievement; athletic prowess; dramatic, musical or artistic development.

4. Dominance, or power which has been achieved over a group, is another recognizable type of status. The school "bad boy" who has successfully defied teachers over a period of time is an example. The leader of a gang, the oldest member of the group, the person with a strong personality—these people may affect the relationship of class members to each other and with the teacher.

5. The amount of money which a student has to spend may also determine status. Primary-grade children frequently buy their way to favor by distributing candy or other treats. In the same way, the secondary student who works after school and has more spending money than others, or the student who gets a large allowance attains status through his affluence.

6. A kind of functional status also exists. This comes from ownership or control of the equipment which is needed for an activity. The boy who owns the bat, ball and glove earns his way into the game. The student who has a car at his disposal becomes essential to those who do not.

Several kinds of status affect the desires of adolescents to learn.



A good learning environment provides opportunity for discovering ways of achieving status.

Much attention has been given in recent years to the use of sociometric techniques, the measurement of social distance, and personality testing. These techniques have increased teachers' awareness of the importance of social status in learning. Studies now under way give evidence that if the teacher disregards characteristics cherished by students, the entire pattern of human relationships within the group will deteriorate. Thus, appointing an unpopular boy as captain of a team or asking a person who is not well-accepted to take a leading role in a play decreases the quality of relationships in the group. However, if the group itself undertakes to broaden opportunities, or to give everyone a chance to play a certain role, the quality of relationships improves. Other studies² indicate a strong relationship between learning and achievement of status. In creating a good learning environment, ample opportunity must be given students to learn ways of achieving status.

Student Purposes Affect Learning Experiences

Attaining status is important. Too often, however, the school seems to the child to stress activities which are far removed from his goals or purposes. Unless the student has a genuine sense of purpose and direction, his learning is at a minimum.

Helping pupils define goals is a continuing teacher responsibility.

A good learning environment provides opportunity for children to examine what is important to them and to plan ways of working toward these goals. For example, a teacher, together with the class, may decide that each person should work on something he has never tried before or something which he has tried but does inadequately. Another group may be guided to undertake certain activities which lead it into the community or which require careful reading and note-taking. Cooperatively thinking through the objectives and reasons for study is certain to improve the quality of learning. Often the purposes for an activity, which originally

² Foshay, A. W., and Wann, Kenneth. *Children's Social Values: An Action Research Study*. To be published by Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1954.

may have been only those of the teacher, may really become those of the students.

Goal-setting is not, however, an activity which is done once and is then complete. Goal-setting is a part of continuous evaluation. How are we doing? Was our original planning adequate? Do we now see new purposes that we did not see when we started? Questions such as these must be asked frequently if the work is to remain purposeful.

In one elementary school, the teacher and children had had an unusually good morning. They finished their work, cleaned up for lunch, and then had a few minutes to talk over the morning. The teacher led the discussion. When interest was at its height, he said, "I once knew a little girl who went home at noon and told her mother that she didn't ever want to go back to school. What do you suppose made her feel that way?"

Responses were quick and enlightening: "Maybe the teacher didn't call on her." "Maybe she couldn't get her arithmetic as well as the others." "Maybe she was in the poorest reading group." Relentlessly the answers poured out, and in these objective replies the teacher saw the personal dreads of the children who were in his care—of Mary, whom he often didn't call on for fear the other children would laugh at her faltering speech; of John, who was having such an unhappy time with arithmetic; and of Gretchen, who was the poorest reader in the class. Here was his challenge. How could he find ways to counteract these dreads? If asked directly, these children might have difficulty in stating their goals: "to be liked by the teacher," "to do well in arithmetic," "to get into a higher reading group." Yet their responses to the problem described by the teacher gave ample evidence of their purposes. Unless children can see progress toward their goals, their experiences in school will not lead to desirable learning.

Teachers find many ways to use children's purposes as a guide to planning class activities and as a means of evaluating progress. Some teachers begin a new class with a discussion in which the members of the group talk about their past experiences and plans for the future. Others organize

**Pupils need
to recognize
progress toward
their goals.**

activities which will give students a wide latitude in expressing themselves in order to reveal their preferences, their reactions, their strengths and weaknesses, their values, and the problems of importance to them. A mathematics teacher in Wichita begins with a series of self-testing activities in which students note the skills which need review, then work in small groups to improve these skills. Such an activity is largely self-directed and gives the teacher an opportunity to observe the relationships of students, their feelings about themselves, and their attitudes toward the subject. A biology teacher in another school begins the year by asking students to bring snapshots of themselves and their families. As they show their pictures, they discuss family resemblances and family interests. This discussion frequently stimulates the study of heredity and environment, and also gives the teacher insight into personal problems which may interfere with learning.

Important Things Should Happen at School

Activities should
be related
to personal
problems and
concerns of
pupils.

Assessment of student objectives, student interests and student concerns helps the teacher to plan work on topics or problems which are of genuine importance to children or young people. Students can be made to feel the importance of understandings and appreciations they will need in becoming effective citizens. In addition, immediate problems which traditionally have not been a part of the school program may be considered. The "Diary of a First-Grade Teacher," in Chapter I, told of dramatic play and problem stories related to the personal concerns of the children. The same activity was described in Chapter V—the story of a senior high school group. Certainly, with people of all ages, personal problems are of major importance. A quality of generalization-making and objectivity in dealing with problems of a personal nature protects the individual from curious probing. This must be maintained even though some students may be eager to discuss a number of their own personal concerns. A teacher who deals with the study of human relationships is dealing with emotional problems for which he cannot always expect a "right" answer. These problems

the student must think through for himself. They may be studied through the problem-solving procedure: defining the problem and analyzing it for causes, for possible courses of action and for the probable results of suggestions. The use of activities to permit group consideration of personal problems is the subject of much educational research at the present time. New materials dealing with personal concerns are being developed for school use.

In one senior high school an English teacher and an art teacher worked together to develop the creative expression of students. They realized that such expression must stem from personal experiences and concerns of the students. They used various means to encourage the students to write of their own ideas, thoughts and reactions. Pictures of neighborhood scenes were discussed. Paintings by recognized artists were shown to the class and used in discussing line, color,

Creative expression can be a catharsis for dealing with emotional problems.



mood. Then students were given paints and asked to paint their own neighborhoods. When the paintings were completed, the students were asked to write about their paintings. Some of their descriptions are evidence of the value of this activity. This example describes the home neighborhood, but it also tells much of the student's reaction to his neighborhood and to his school.

The neighborhood I painted was mine. One day I looked out of my back window and really saw my backyard. It was all so very crowded, houses—some tall and others short, clothes hanging from everyone's line, people talking and shouting to each other, and sometimes I heard songs in foreign languages.

In class one day our teacher asked us to draw our neighborhood, so I decided to draw my backyard. As I drew the picture, I felt and heard in my mind all the things I mentioned. It wasn't such a bad feeling, but was exciting and colorful. I chose the colors as I pictured my backyard. When I first started to do the picture, it seemed hopeless to finish; but the teacher said it was nice, so I tried; and I seemed to finish a good picture. I still think it isn't very good. Anyway, I enjoyed doing it.

Some teachers have found the unfinished story helpful for considering personal experiences. In the story of a senior high school group, one type was described. Another type which develops problem-solving skills in interpersonal relationships calls for a decision which will never be completely right or completely wrong. Here is an example of such a story:

"Mom! Mom!" Harry called loudly as the door slammed shut behind him. His voice echoed through the house, but there was no answer to his call. Today of all days, his mother wasn't at home. They had lived here only two weeks, but those two weeks had seemed like a lifetime to Harry, for he had found it very difficult to make friends. But today Dick had asked him to go to the movie with the other fellows. They would call for him any minute now, and he had no money. What should he do? The only money he knew of in the house was in the blue sugar bowl—the milk money. But he had promised his mother that he would never touch it. He walked to the cupboard and looked longingly at the blue bowl. What should he do? Just then the door bell rang and he knew that Dick was waiting for him. What should he do?"

* Story from unpublished manuscript belonging to the Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute of School Experimentation, Teachers College, Columbia University.

Discussion of this story will bring out all of the points which make a decision difficult. Wrestling with Harry's problem leads to other problems in which decisions are difficult to make. Analysis of the factors which determine solutions provides practice in problem solving.

Several companies are now releasing films which focus on the objective study of personal problems and permit the student to think solutions through for himself.

School Experience Should Be Related to Other Experience

If school activities are to have meaning, they must relate to experiences the child has had and to his life outside of school. The content of school activities must be made significant in the lives of students. Children now in the elementary school do not know about the last war as part of their own experience. They were the "war babies" or, perhaps, were not even born until after the war ended. To the junior high school student this recent history is almost as remote as World War I or the War for Independence. It all happened a long time ago and the significance of the events of history must be made to mean something to the students in their lives.

In many communities young children cannot remember a time when there was not television. Senior high school students find it difficult to believe that people are still living who remember the days of the horse and buggy, for young people are now growing up in the jet age. Dinner table conversation sometimes reveals young people of today who are better versed in the principles of atomic energy than are the average adults. To the youth of today, space travel does not seem fantastic, for there is little doubt that it will be achieved within their lifetime. The perspective of the individual's actual life-span both limits and intensifies his learning; and if school subjects are to have meaning, their content must be related to the outside world, immediate and future. Thus, the radio or television programs with which the student is familiar, the events which are the subject of discussion in his home, the kinds of employment which he sees about him, the electrical gadgets in his mother's kitchen, and prospective

The content of school subjects should be related to out-of-school life.



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military service which he faces may serve as centers for organizing academic work in science or in social studies.

Work-experience programs, and activities in conservation and community improvement are properly a part of a good learning environment. The class which develops a nature walk for the community, or the student council which conducts a safety campaign throughout the school system, has contributed positively to civic betterment. Probably there is no better way to overcome civic lethargy than to help students learn to play an active role as citizens.

The Environment Should Provide for Individual Differences

Not all learning activities are group activities. What the individual feels and thinks and does determines learning. The teacher has the responsibility of planning so that each child may proceed at his own pace without being penalized if his pace is either faster or slower than that of others.

One difficulty is that the goal of a class may be so firmly fixed and so specifically defined that everyone is measured by this standard. For example, the first grade traditionally has been looked upon as the place in which one learns to read from printed books. The child has counted on this factor before he came to school; his parents have talked about it; many activities in the first grade seem to lead toward reading. Children brag of their progress in reading the printed page. And the child who feels he is not attaining this goal may become anxious or discouraged.

The first-grade teacher must help parent and child avoid putting such a premium on reading that other activities appear unimportant. One first-grade teacher planned the first half hour of every day as the time when each child worked at building his own book. He did a page a day, illustrated by a picture. The teacher started with each child as he arrived in the morning, asking him about his picture, and writing the child's own words on the opposite page of the book. Thus each child, in addition to the usual class charts and reading opportunities, had his own experience chart—or in his words, his "own book." He had made it himself. As the teacher looked it over, she discussed the pictures, reviewed

Teacher planning should encourage each child to progress at his own pace.

the stories and helped him with new ones. Each child was able to proceed at his own pace. Group learning took on no pattern which discouraged the slower "readers." Every child had maximum help and encouragement in learning. There was no reading period in the day when everyone sat down with the same primer. A variety of activities was always in progress at the same time while the teacher was working with a small group in reading, or story telling, or dramatizing of stories. In this way, there was not the expectation that everyone should be doing the same thing at the same time.

These suggestions do not minimize the importance of reading as a tool for learning or the importance of helping every child gain his maximum reading skill. Every child, however, regardless of his ability to learn by reading, should be given assistance in learning in a wide variety of other ways.

Both secondary and elementary school classrooms should be learning laboratories rather than places for reciting what has been learned elsewhere. Activities should be planned within this learning laboratory. Work in small groups or individual activities can be carried on simultaneously. In the elementary schoolroom, it is possible to plan so that one or two groups of children are simultaneously engaged in such activities as using the spelling board, drilling themselves with self-help arithmetic cards, painting at the easel, working with clay, or reading independently, while another group may be working with the teacher. How can the teacher provide for differences in reading ability so that students will not become discouraged? One answer is to be found in a wide variety of group work through which children can learn reading along with other activities and can recognize their own progress.

The experience approach to reading in the early grades is an example of varied activity. The entire group watches a caterpillar, or visits the neighborhood store, or observes construction on a new building. When they return to the classroom, some children decide to draw pictures of the experience, others to dramatize it, and others to dictate a story to the teacher. When the work period is over, each group shows what it has done. All the pupils enjoy listening to the story,

Classrooms
should be
laboratories for
individual
and group
experiences.

or watching the plays, or seeing the pictures. Some want to read the story aloud, while others enjoy listening. Each group has attained equal recognition for its work and each group has learned something of importance.

Many avenues to learning may be used for the study of a single topic. Films, filmstrips and recordings may be brought to the classroom. Books, pamphlets, newspaper clippings and magazine articles may be collected. Members of the class are helped to locate information which they can share with each other. The research periods have many facets: looking up pictures, reading textbooks, consulting reference books, using related textbooks or periodicals. Bulletin boards are used to develop ideas. People from the community are brought into the classroom, or members of the class may go out and interview them.

Some pupils may interview a person who tells of his experience pertaining to the subject being studied. Films may be used to present the same ideas in a different way. The stress is upon providing experiences through which every child can learn. Reading is not the only basis for gaining information.

In the secondary classroom, one group can be doing research in the library, another working on a chart for reporting to the class, and another working with the teacher in a corner of the room. Members of each group must have clear purposes, know what they are to do to accomplish their purposes, and must regularly report their progress. Any group may become disorganized when the work is finished and time remains on its hands. The same problems characterize adult groups. These can be met by careful planning.

Individual differences in the classroom are met by providing reading materials covering a wide range of difficulty, all bearing directly on the problems which the group is studying. Some supplementary books which are simply written give as good information on atomic energy, or on the peoples of other lands, or on history, as do the usual secondary textbooks. Provision for use of such a range of materials is essential.

School experiences should furnish many and varied avenues to learning.

The classroom should contain materials to meet a wide range of abilities.

The work in a class is varied when it is organized around problems. For example, a district which is carrying on a great deal of new building offers many ways to make arithmetic meaningful—such as projecting the school population for a period of years or figuring board feet of lumber needed for construction. An English class may publish a monthly magazine. In a speech class, one group may work on a play, another plan a group discussion, another prepare to tell stories at the local library or to younger students in school.

A variety of learning activities should be planned for the individual student as well as for groups. This not only meets differences in interest and ability, but also gives practice in the use of different learning sources. The adult often finds himself called upon to interview, to observe at firsthand, to analyze conflicting opinions, to listen, to read and to organize many kinds of information gleaned in fragments from a wide variety of sources.

Parents are invaluable aides in the problem of providing varied resources, for their contacts in the community make them aware of many such resources. Parents like to work with the school which their children attend. The talents and skills of parents are valuable resources at particular times in the year's work. A mother who is a pianist may be asked to plan a music hour as a special treat. If her talent is exceptional, this resource is as good for high school as for the elementary school. A mother who works at ceramics or one who weaves on a loom might like to work with students who are interested. Parents who have taken interesting trips or who have lived in various sections of the country are also good resources. Frequently the vocation of the parent also qualifies him to give help. In a study of the community, parents may be able to arrange interviews or trips. If work-experience is planned, parents may be able to offer suggestions concerning places and types of work. The translator for a bank or for an importer may have a background of ideas which schools could use in social science. This kind of partnership with parents gives a new outlook which stimulates a better learning environment.

Talents and
skills of
parents may
be valuable
resources for
the classroom.

It has been the purpose in this chapter to point out that no single, isolated factor creates a good learning environment. What is significant is the reaction of students to the environment. Their reactions, their guidance by the teacher, help to mold the various activities into learning experiences. We have described only a few such activities, trying to approach these from the standpoint of the student reactions which make them into experiences good for learning. If the environment is to be filled with opportunities for good learning experiences, it must meet the need of young people to feel welcome and wanted; their need to be successful; their need of status; their need to work on things which seem important to them.

It is the responsibility of teachers to guide the development of insights, skills and appreciations that are valuable to society and to make these significant to children. When knowledge is turned into action—when important understandings, skills and attitudes result in effective living—then the content and activities of the curriculum become valuable learning experiences.



Evaluation Is Important

EVALUATION is a basic factor in developing a good learning environment. Effective learning results as teachers and pupils assess the elements in learning and work toward determined goals. The identification of problems to be solved, the selection of questions to be studied, the clarification of objectives to be achieved, the diagnosis of pupil needs, the selection of teaching aids, the decision to organize particular learning activities—all are evaluative activities. Evaluation is making decisions concerning the nature of the job to be done with a particular child or group of children. This process of decision-making is indispensable to effective learning. Evaluation is much more than testing, reporting pupil progress or promoting individuals and groups from one grade to another.

Learning is determined largely by effective evaluation. Evaluation has to do with values, with purposes, with hypotheses and with continued and cooperative use of the evaluation process as an integral part of teaching and as a means of pushing ahead for educational improvement.

Evaluation in accordance with such principles would make use of a variety of procedures. These procedures must not become stereotypes; rather, their effectiveness is associated with their spontaneous, careful use in a particular situation. No list of techniques of evaluation could be useful to all teachers; hence, procedures certain teachers have used are described. It is hoped that these might suggest additional methods which will make the process of evaluation increasingly creative.

This chapter describes evaluation as part of creating an effective learning environment. The first part, "Evaluation in a First Grade," describes in some detail the role of evaluation in teaching. Part two, "The Role of Evaluation in the

Learning Environment," summarizes principles of evaluation and relates these principles to teaching and learning.

Evaluation in a First Grade

The work of a first-grade group in an Oak Ridge school illustrates effective learning and, at the same time, shows important elements in evaluation.

The first-grade teacher, Mrs. Jones, was concerned with helping *each child* grow in skills, in adjustment to school and in his awareness of his environment. She hypothesized (guessed, expected, predicted) that children will make significant progress to the degree that experiences are intelligently provided.

Evaluation has to do with the progress of each child.

As the year went on, many efforts were made to help children engage in meaningful experiences by identifying their interests, determining pupil needs and discovering local resources. The help of parents was sought in a variety of ways.

Early in the year, the children had many experiences which related to music. As the teacher and her pupils experimented with different instruments, they found that parents could help them. Children were given opportunities to hear and to discuss different types of music and musical instruments. The interest of the children grew as parents came to their class to demonstrate various instruments. Children could *see* and *feel* the instruments. The accordion fascinated the class. The children asked their teacher about many kinds of music and about other musical instruments. The music activities in this class illustrate how curiosity, interest, knowledge and appreciation may result from listening to children's comments, using their suggestions and drawing on local resources. Observing the growth of interests and appreciations is a type of evaluation. Use of information obtained in this way provides a basis for guiding the growth of individuals.

As the teacher talked with the children about music and about various types of instruments, the class became especially interested in the organ. One child mentioned that her mother played the organ and would be glad for the class to come to a local church to hear her play. As the children listened to this mother's playing, they were impressed with the skill



Parents can help supply experiences through which effective evaluation activities occur.

of the organist, the beauty of the music and the dignity of the setting. The mother describes the trip in this way:

What we did was simple. We gave the children an opportunity to listen to the organ in its own environment. When they arrived at the church, I was already at the organ playing as in the prelude of a service. Christmas carols offer music which is familiar and suitable to the organ tone. The children came around the organ where they could see the operation of the stops, manuals and foot pedals; each was permitted to produce a sound on the organ. They seemed most interested in the chimes and foot pedals, but some were timid about touching the instrument.

The whole afternoon was a rewarding one from a parent's point of view. The children respond in such individual ways that it is a revelation of the numerous personalities in your child's environment outside the usual parent-child-visitor relationship. My own child puffed up like a pouter pigeon. As a parent who rather shies away from highly organized school activities, this type of enrichment of the children's experience is something I find most satisfying. Of almost as much interest is the pictorial record of the individual. I feel the fact that the organ was introduced in its own environment is perhaps the key to arousing the children's curiosity; for the tremendous volume of sound can be terrifying as well as impressive.

The aim of this teacher was to help each child become sensitive to the beauties and interests of the things around him. She turned frequently to parents. Jim's father had developed a keen interest and much skill in raising homing pigeons. The teacher tells of a boy's bringing a bird to school:

One of my first graders, Jim, found a starling in a sack of grain. He, with the help of his mother, brought the bird to school for an afternoon. The class had an interesting time observing a live bird at close range. We secured books from the library and read about the habits and living conditions of the starling. In telling the class where he found the bird and how he caught it, Jim mentioned that it was in a sack of grain. The children wanted to know what a sack of grain was and why Jim would have a sack of grain? He explained to the class that his father had the grain for his homing pigeons. The boys and girls asked Jim if his father would bring a pigeon to school and talk about the pigeon's loft and the way these birds carry messages.

Following these experiences, the children discussed the things they had learned. They used the information gained from a parent and from stories, songs, pictures and discussions. Children were making observations, seeing relationships, working together and becoming increasingly creative.



The teacher should be sensitive to growth in relation to agreed-upon purposes.

The group had been reading about bread. Many questions raised by the pupils were answered through the use of a film. They now wanted to see how bread was made.

A visit to their school cafeteria improved the children's concepts of quantity and size, of the complexity of the school building, and of the variety and kinds of work that must be done in such an activity as the making of bread. Surely a teacher needs to recognize the attainment of such understandings as evidences of growth. The maturity of concepts, the ability to adjust in out-of-class situations, and the ability to acquire information from the community were evidences of growth. The pursuit of pupil interests had led into issues and situations of increasing social significance. Problems of relationship of the group to their school emerged.



This teacher made extensive records of such growth and used these records as a basis for parent conferences and narrative reports. She used observations, tests, records of home visits, records of conferences with parents and a variety of health records for each child.

As the school year progressed, the teacher regularly summarized her observations of the group. These summaries were used in parents' meetings.

A variety of out-of-class experiences had been planned. These experiences helped members of the group to assume responsibility, to use self-control, to plan and to function as a part of a group. After sizing up the group, teacher and parents decided that it was now time for a more extensive type of experience.

A Study of Farms Evolves

Throughout the experiences with the starling, the pigeon, and the making of bread, the children showed an insatiable curiosity about farms. They often talked about the grain that came from a farm. They asked many questions about farming. Mrs. Jones encouraged their curiosity. Films, filmstrips, stories, songs, poems and pictures about animals and plants were discussed. Their questions, ideas and statements were listed; and children were encouraged to find answers. The children repeatedly suggested that the class visit a farm. They considered the problems involved in such a trip and made the decision to go as a class. This planning helped the children to state purposes, prepare word lists, satisfy curiosities, respect property, share responsibilities, make choices, practice safety, plan together, honor decisions agreed upon by the class and get firsthand experiences.

The boys and girls were definite about what they wanted to see at the farm. The following is the original list of things they suggested when making plans for the trip:

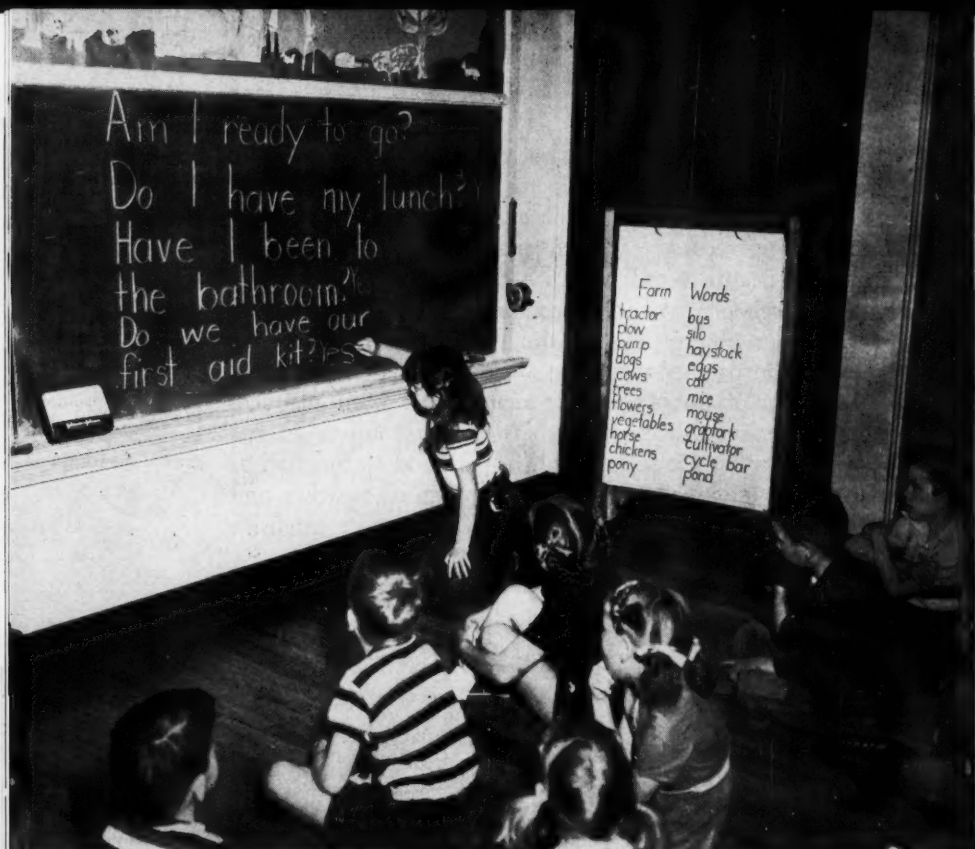
1. *Animals*: We want to see a barn. We want to see these animals: cows and calves, big chickens and baby chicks, pigs and hogs, horses and ponies, sheep and lambs.

2. *Big machinery*: We want to see big machinery, We want to see a grapple-fork, and we want to see how it works. We want to

The teacher should use many instruments in evaluating growth.

Over-all observations of children's growth should be discussed at parent meetings.

Children should have guidance in verbalizing purposes and plans.



see a sickle-bar, tractor, plow, cultivator, wagon and drill—and everything else that Mr. Odum will show us.

3. *Crops:* We want to see all of his big crops. We would like to see the vegetables, too. We want to see the greenhouse and to see the goose clean the strawberry patch.

Identifying jobs to be done is an important aspect of evaluation. Children reviewed plans for the trip and began to see their own part in the plans. Purposes were becoming clarified. The question, "What will be my job?" was clearly answered.

Checking the first-aid kit helped children recognize their responsibility in preventing accidents on the trip. Planning, teaching and evaluation were now becoming interrelated. Opportunities were created so that each child might make his best contribution on this occasion.

The children now read and checked their plans for the trip. The development of such plans by the group revealed growth. Are they more mature? Do they anticipate problems? Do they engage in problem solving?

A Day at the Farm

At the farm, the children could see that their preplanning helped them observe more intelligently. They saw a cow milked by hand. They had listed this activity in their original planning. In kindergarten, when they had visited a dairy, they had seen cows milked with an electric milker. For most of the pupils, seeing hand-milking was a new experience.

The children had wanted to see cows and baby calves. Some children pulled grass and fed the calves. Plans were becoming a reality.

The children enjoyed climbing on a farm wagon. To safeguard the children, the teacher stood near the disk. They learned why the barn had ventilation at the top. The children looked carefully at the sickle-bar and tractor. These farm implements were like ones they had seen in a film at school.

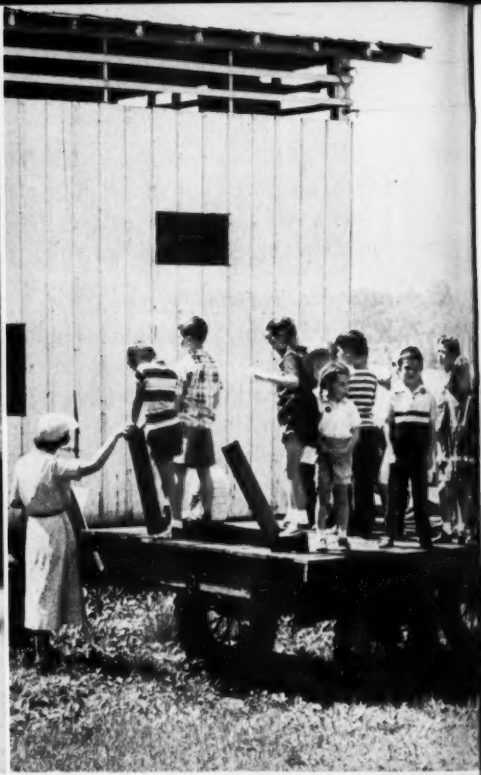
The children checked their plans while at the farm. They read about the grapple-fork and then examined it at close range. Gene and Carol wanted to *feel* it and *see* what made it *work*. They were told that an electric motor was used to operate it.

Evaluation could not wait! The group needed to "take stock." Future plans for the day depended upon their work thus far.

Some of the group inspected a hen's nest in a chicken house. The children learned how a farmer may collect the eggs from the outside so that it is unnecessary for him to enter the hen house. The children were asked to be quiet when visiting the poultry buildings.

Again, the teacher and children referred to their plans while at the farm. An evaluation was made of what they had learned so far. The plans became increasingly important. Children were learning many things about farm animals, machinery and crops by observing these at a farm and by raising questions of importance.

Evaluation is
a continuous
process.



The children visited the greenhouse and had an opportunity to ask questions about how plants grow. New problems arose. The children wanted to walk in a plowed field. They felt the soft earth. Attitudes and appreciations were developing as revealed by comments, questions and suggestions.

Evaluation reveals attitudes, appreciations and feelings.

The children saw sheep sheared and got close to the sheep and felt the sheared wool. They were surprised by the greasy, coarse texture. The children learned many things about farm animals which they had not anticipated.

David described two sheep as "before and after." His comments revealed increased knowledge.

Children had asked to see mother hogs and baby pigs. They learned that a mother hog is called a "sow." The pigs' drinking fountain was described by one child as being made "round like a silo."

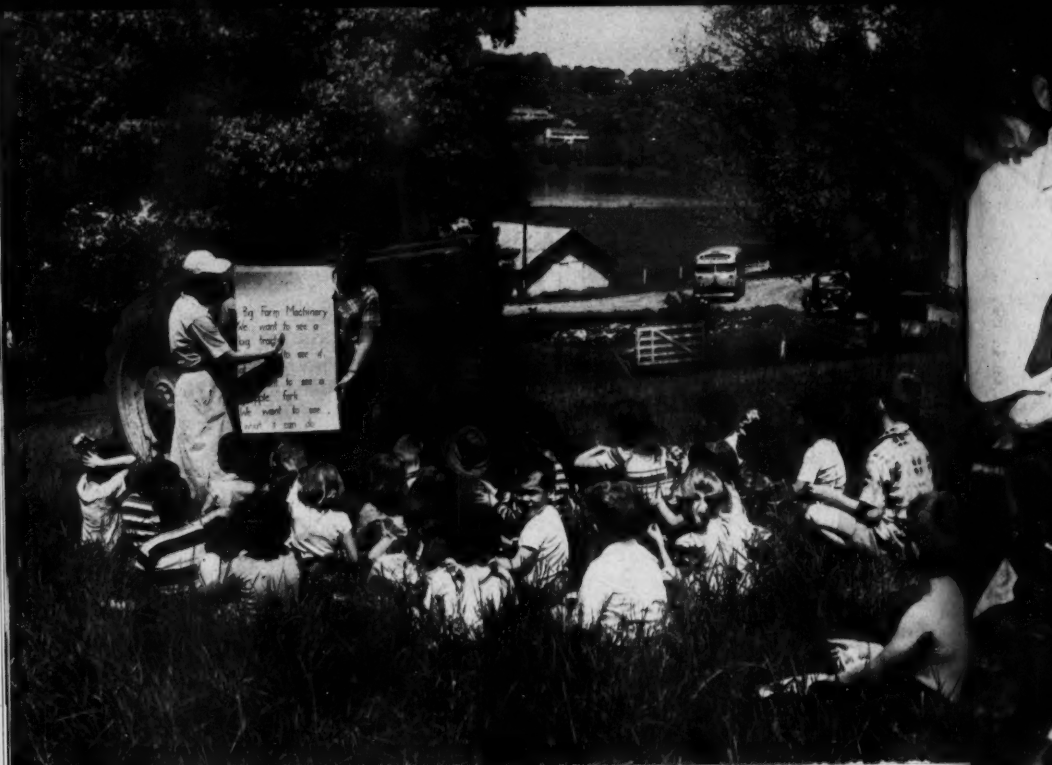
At the end of the day, while still at the farm, the pupils again reviewed plans which they had made for the trip. The teacher asked the children if they were satisfied with what they had done and had seen. Their enthusiasm was evident, for new horizons had been opened. Evaluation had been carried out at all phases of the trip. Evaluation had been a real part of the experience.

A Field Trip Is Followed Up in Class Work

The field trip was but one phase of learning for this first-grade group. As the teacher helped children reflect upon the farm visit, additional evaluation activities were used. In the discussion, the children revealed their understandings. Evaluation was an active learning process. How could the questions, understandings, ideas and observations of the children be determined? Discussions, creative stories, drawings of important ideas—all are evaluation activities. The teacher's role is one of creating a stimulating environment.

Evaluation should be an active learning process.

The children reviewed their trip by looking through the photographs made at the farm. This enabled them to study important scenes at greater length and to find out how well they had carried out their original plans. It also created a setting whereby learning could be extended.





The Farm Study Gives Rise to Other Projects

The children wanted to do something for the manager of the farm, to show appreciation for his services as their guide. They decided to write him letters to say "thank you" and to tell him what they had enjoyed most. Each of these letters was a personal note. Next, they decided to draw some pictures for him about their trip. These letters and pictures were made into a book. This document was used as evaluative data. The class then chose children to pack the book and others to address the package. Other pupils were selected to present it at the parcel post window to be weighed and mailed.

Before the group left for the post office, however, the

Evaluation
should be a
creative process.

principal came into the classroom to talk with the children about their trip. He made arrangements for the class to go inside the post office to follow the package from the window to the outgoing mail sack.

Parents Evaluate a First-Grade Project

Evaluation
should include
the reactions
of parents.

The teacher wanted to know what the children were saying at home about their work at school. She believed that parents might help in evaluating the project. A group of parents were asked to write their reactions to the farm trip. Comments of some of the parents of the children in this group of first graders follow:

We are glad that you asked us to write our opinions of the benefit Al derived from the experience of planning, making and reviewing a trip to the farm. Al certainly obtained great benefit from the planning phase in particular. So often his experiences have been "spontaneous" and somewhat "haphazard." Some other experience in itself could be a good one and our family discussions of the particulars, complete; yet, he would not remember them long. With the planning of the details and the check list you used to recall their plans during the trip, he knew what he was to see, saw it, and knows what he saw.

Our daughter's visit to the farm apparently opened several new fields of interest to her. This has been shown in questions which she has asked from observations made while driving through the country and in general discussions comparing the farm with her grandfather's farm. I feel that this trip was very well worth the time and effort involved. Highlights of the trip were observations of the various farm animals. The livestock, particularly seeing a cow being milked, seemed to be discussed in more detail than other things such as farm machinery. Our daughter was able to grasp the connection between the cow being milked and the milk we receive daily in bottles. Although she has visited her grandfather's farm several times, she found many new points of interest on this trip.

Parents can
make specific
comments of
an evaluative
nature.

The highlights of the first-grade school year, as far as my son, Bill, is concerned were the class field trips. Of these trips, the one that made the greatest impression was an all-day visit to the farm. There are several reasons for the lasting impression this trip made; and on the basis of what Bill told me about the trip, the following are major factors that made the trip exciting and educational for him. Because planning for the trip was started well in advance, he had ample time to learn what he was to see

and to do and could develop a real interest in it. The twenty-five-mile bus trip was eagerly anticipated and was a new experience for Bill. Studying farm crops and actually planting seeds in the classroom increased his interest in crops at the farm, and incidentally, helped resolve a long-standing difficulty in learning which foods grow in the ground; which grow above the ground; which come from vines, bushes, trees, and the like; and which do not grow but are made. Seeing the farm animals was an eagerly anticipated experience. Seeing the farm machinery did not arouse too much interest beforehand, but actually turned out to make one of the biggest impressions. Being with a group of his classmates and having things explained in an understandable manner helped greatly. Many of the best-remembered experiences were those involving something his classmates did.

From my own standpoint as a parent who took the trip with the children, the following features were outstanding: Planning was so thorough and arrangements so complete that no difficulties were encountered. The cost of the trip was sufficiently low to enable all pupils to go. No children were injured on the trip nor were there any frightening or otherwise unpleasant experiences. The over-all result for Bill was a rich experience that contributed greatly to his cultural background as well as to his understanding of farm crops, animals and machinery. The illustrated booklet and the photographic record of the trip made a splendid contribution toward increasing my appreciation of the experiences the children gained on the trip and apparently were most useful in the classroom after the trip as a means of refreshing the memory and reviewing points that might have been missed. The experience in handling money for the trip apparently did not make a lasting impression on Bill, or perhaps this was just overshadowed by everything else, so I have not mentioned this as a particularly important feature.

The Teacher Evaluates the Field Trip

The teacher's evaluation included a brochure prepared for parents. Each brochure contained a letter to parents from the teacher, a summary of the children's work, and samples of stories and art work growing out of the trip to the farm.

The teacher invited the parents to a meeting for a summary of the work. The following summary had been prepared by Mrs. Jones in advance and was included in the brochure.

Summary of Our Trip to the Farm

The trip to the farm helped me to evaluate what we had gained from the various small studies and trips that we had had this

The teacher should take the synthesizing role in evaluation.

year. In arranging and carrying through such a trip, much working and planning together are required. Work in skills is also involved.

In learning how to gain the most from participation in a big field trip, smaller lead-up experiences were used first.

1. Mr. Park took a small group of our boys on a nature hike and "cook out."

2. Mr. Park brought a pigeon to our room for us to observe at close range. We read about pigeons and learned how to care for them. We visited the pigeon's loft and saw the bird fly in with a message we had written and attached to its leg before its release at school.

3. We visited the telephone office.

4. We visited the fire station.

5. The children had an opportunity to learn something about music and instruments. They listened to adults play these and then were given a turn to examine and get the "feel" of the instruments with their hands.

6. In relationship to our study of birds, Mr. Gates and his son, Joe, made a feeding station and attached it to our window at school.

The children became interested in the farm from previous group experiences and use of materials available in the classroom, such as stories, songs, games, pictures, poetry and science work carried out during the year. Our trip to the junior high school cafeteria to see Mrs. Stokes make bread was the high light of our study before we planned our trip to the farm.

The children had specific reasons for wanting to visit a farm. They wanted to see farm animals, big machinery, and farm crops growing. The children have had the following active experiences in this project:

To make arrangements for the trip, they wrote to the farm manager asking for permission to visit the farm. They wrote their parents to ask for their written consent to make the trip.

They planned together what they wanted to see, how much the trip would cost, how long they would be gone, what they would need to take, such as a first-aid kit, their lunch, blankets to rest on after lunch, and what they should wear.

We discussed how one was expected to conduct himself on such a trip.

We decided that we must listen carefully to find out the things we were interested in doing and seeing.

We said that we needed to observe the safety rules which we had learned in the classroom, on the playground, and on the buses.

Our principal talked with us about being polite and courteous.

The children had experience in planning, in checking to see

Evaluation is more meaningful when all involved summarize and record the year's growth.

Democratic organization of a group develops initiative and responsibility.

how they were getting along, and finally in group evaluation as to how well they were able to follow their original plans.

We had made reading charts of what the children wanted to see and do. We took these with us on our trip. At regular intervals we would stop at some spot on the trip and read to check and see if we were getting the things done we had set out to do.

The experience did not end with our return home. When we were back in the classroom reviewing all the interesting things we had seen and learned, the pupils suggested that they would like to do something for Mr. Odum, who served as their guide for the farm trip. They decided to write him letters to say "thank you" and to tell him just what they had enjoyed most. Each of these was a personal note. Next, they decided to draw pictures for him about their trip. We made the pictures and letters into a book and wrapped it for mailing.

The class chose the children to address the package. Other children took it to the post office and presented it at the parcel post window to be weighed and mailed. We made arrangements for the class to go inside the post office to follow the package from the window to the outgoing mail sack.

As the culminating musical activity in connection with the study of the farm, the children asked for another visit to the church to hear Mary's mother play the organ. The children expressed a desire to have Mary's mother "make the organ sound like spring on the farm." She was able to improvise musical numbers that were received enthusiastically by the six-year-olds. At the close of the program Carol's comment, "Do we have to go?" reflected how highly this music experience was valued by the children.

The pupils also shared their trip with two kindergarten classes. They wrote invitations for them to visit our room to hear about our trip.

As a final activity, they shared their trip with you, their parents.

Evaluation Throughout the Year

The foregoing account of work in this first grade has described evaluation as an actual part of teaching. The close relationship between evaluation, planning and teaching seems evident. A variety of other evaluation activities was carried out during the year:

1. *Tape recording of children reading.* This was done at intervals during the year. Children were allowed to listen to themselves and to judge their own progress in reading.

2. *Tape recording of the class singing.* These recordings were dated and from time to time the group listened to them. Here they could recognize progress they had made as a group.

Evaluation,
planning and
teaching are
closely related.

Evaluation
throughout a
year should
include a
variety of forms.

3. *Keeping of individual student folders.* Placed in their folders were a variety of materials—art work, written work, stories and work with numbers. Each paper was dated so that comparisons could be made. The children did not see these folders for the first few months. About Christmas, the children were given their folders and helped to summarize their progress. Later the folders were sent home for parents to study. Growth was evident.

4. *Using a variety of tests.* Results of ability, achievement and personality tests enabled the teacher to identify needs of individuals and of the group.

5. *Conferences with parents.* These conferences, held at frequent intervals, provided an opportunity for parents and teacher to summarize progress, identify problems and plan ways of working together.

6. *Parent observations of work in the class.* Several parents observed the class as often as three or four times and prepared summaries of their observations. These parents were conscientious in trying to determine the social and emotional needs of their children.

7. *Sending carefully written reports to parents.* These narrative reports were divided into two parts—"Growth in Social and Personal Development" and "Growth in Skills and Understandings." Such reports were sent to parents twice during the year.

8. *Carrying out a series of studies dealing with reporting pupil-progress to parents.* The teacher tried to help parents become aware of various ways of reporting progress. Actually, as she pointed out to them, the child reports each time he talks to them about school. It was also hoped that parents would become more sensitive to their children's needs as they worked and played at home. Five reporting procedures were employed. These were (a) oral reports in the form of parent-teacher conferences, (b) written reports on individual growth, (c) observations at school (These were made by most of the mothers.), (d) a teacher-pupil reporting session attended by almost all of the parents near the close of the school year, and (e) written reports of the work of the group.

This story relates the careful way in which a teacher goes about the process of teaching. An integral part of teaching is evaluation. Actually, the learning environment was created as the teacher helped pupils clarify purposes and engage in meaningful experiences. Planning a unit, engaging in learning experiences and evaluating are closely related, as has been demonstrated in the work of the first-grade group described in this section.

The evaluation process should be an integral part of the learning environment.

Role of Evaluation in the Learning Environment

This section will attempt to clarify the nature of evaluation and to establish basic principles which underlie the concept.

Development of the Evaluation Concept

Teaching is sometimes considered to be a process apart from evaluation. For their plans, some teachers depend almost entirely on materials prepared by a local or state curriculum group. Other teachers seem to follow the plan of their textbooks. This conception of teaching has tended to separate various phases of teaching into airtight compartments. In short, planning, teaching and testing have each been regarded as separate operations.

The early writers on curriculum development seemed to think that testing was a function only of specialists or experts especially trained for this job. During this period, which was known as the "testing era," tests were usually developed, administered, scored and interpreted by the specialist.

As work in curriculum progressed, a conception of measurement was developed which extended earlier notions of testing. Measurement was thought of as an objective process necessitating the use of instruments which would give precise measures of pupil potentialities and accomplishment. This period was the "measurement era." Many curriculum workers during this era made the assumption that children of a given age and grade level were alike in most respects. Their writings failed to give the impression that the concept of individual differences made necessary a variety of ways of working, varied content, differentiated purposes, and a variety of evidences of individual growth for an individual.

Following the "testing era" and the "measurement era," knowledge of child growth and development was extended; and greater emphasis was given to helping teachers recognize procedures for dealing with individual differences. The "evaluation" concept emerged. This point of view suggests that information about an individual—his growth, his purposes, his needs, his values and his thinking—must be assessed in an attempt to help him define his objectives and pursue these successfully. The concept of evaluation is of vital im-

The concept of individual differences necessitates using various evidences of growth.

Goal defining and seeking requires teacher-pupil analysis of pertinent growth factors.

portance in the learning environment. The assumption is made that the work of a teacher in creating this learning environment is essentially an evaluative job. A teacher can effectively direct an individual's learning only when he takes into consideration many of the factors which affect growth and status. The process of securing information about individuals and of summarizing it as a basis for intelligent interpretation is an integral part of evaluation.

The Learning Environment Reflects Values

As a teacher makes decisions concerning purposes, content or methods—values become operative. Such decisions are vital to the learning environment, since the appropriateness of the work can be viewed only in terms of choices based on values.

Throughout the stories and illustrations in the early sections of this yearbook, the influence of values is evident. Those principles which are held as important, worth while, or "good" give direction to the learning environment. Such values give direction to action. The rural upper-grade teacher, no doubt, valued the principle of pupil participation in life-like learning experiences for democratic citizenship more than she valued textbook learning alone. Hence, as one examines the effectiveness of that school environment, one must attempt to discern the values held by the teacher, the pupils and the community. The appearance of the room, the topics studied, the relationships between pupil and teacher, the report card, and many other phases of the school reflect values held in that particular school and community.

Teachers may find it helpful to undertake some plan of examining their values. Such an activity might cause an individual teacher to ask himself such questions as:

What are the values of education which I cherish most?

What do I want to do for young people?

What kinds of characteristics should students develop?

What are the most important things that need to be accomplished this week?

How do my attitudes and beliefs and background influence my teaching?

Likewise, the day-by-day activities of a school reflect the values which individual teachers or the school faculty accept.

The values of school and community give direction to the learning environment.

Shall our assembly program be conducted by students, or shall we have an outside speaker?

Shall we use a ready-made workbook, or shall we develop activities related to the school and community?

Shall I play ball with my class at recess, or talk with other teachers?

Shall I help students during a free period, or fill in report cards?

Shall we take a field trip, or shall I just tell the class about the eroded field?

Shall I visit Johnny's home and talk with his mother, or is my own recreation more important this afternoon?

Shall I work with a group of pupils in making an aquarium, or shall I do it myself in much less time some afternoon?

Shall I give my students the pattern for Thanksgiving turkeys, or help them create a Thanksgiving mural?

Thousands of decisions like these are made by teachers daily. The decisions made are evidence of those things which are considered important.

The creation of a learning environment provides numerous opportunities for making judgments. As educators — teachers, administrators and supervisors—engage in all aspects of program planning, the "valuing" or judgment-making operation is in progress. The personnel of a school system, as well as people in each individual school, need to work together in defining those key values basic to planning. Decisions concerning values underlie all program planning. Examples of these key value-decisions are evident in such issues as:

Who should plan the educational program? What is the school's responsibility to its community?

How much money should be spent on the educational program?

How will the budget be developed?

What part should parents and pupils play in planning the program?

Then, too, the individual teacher has certain judgments to make which will be fundamental to all planning. These questions may be posed:

To what extent does the work in a classroom reflect a clearly formulated set of values?

To what extent are the teacher's procedures based on values to which he gives allegiance?

The day-by-day activities of the classroom reflect the teacher's values.

Decisions of school personnel concerning values should underlie all program planning.

An important aspect of the learning environment is the creation of a setting which encourages and aids teachers in considering values.

A Learning Environment Reflects Purposes

Formulating and defining purposes is an essential aspect of evaluation.

Closely allied with the process of "valuing" is the job of clarification of purposes to be achieved. Perhaps one of the paramount aspects of the evaluation activities of the Eight Year Study and of the Southern Association Study was the conviction that evaluation activities must reflect purposes being sought. That is to say, an essential aspect of evaluation is the formulation of purposes, followed by a thorough analysis of the elements which make up each purpose. One common omission in this process is the failure of a school faculty or individual teacher to define or analyze objectives in specific action terms. A school group may say that an important purpose is improving citizenship of its pupils. Such a statement is not very meaningful as a teacher faces the task of program planning for a particular day. The objective becomes directive as he and the children are able to define its elements. Only as this is done can he view next steps for work with a particular child or group. Definition of the citizenship objective may, for instance, reveal the need for helping children develop responsibility for the care of the lawn in front of the school building. In this way an application of general purpose to behavior is made. Such specifics are essential in planning the curriculum.

Assessment of all growth factors should be a prerequisite to formulating purposes.

Without a doubt, an important phase in creating the learning environment is the establishment of clear and specific purposes. The teacher will have difficulty in planning and executing an effective program without first formulating purposes. Again, the assumption is made that the process of identifying and clarifying purposes is essentially an evaluation activity. What is the source of a set of school and classroom purposes? What procedures are needed in clarifying such purposes?

As one explores the source of purposes and their formulations, he must make a vigorous assessment of all factors concerning the growth of a particular group of children. With what needs are we concerned in working with a particular

group? The interrelationship of values and purpose is evident. For example, what are the health needs of each individual in the group? As a teacher formulates objectives, it becomes apparent that the process cannot be concluded during the first few days of the year. Certainly, the task is not to be finished before school opens. The extent to which defining purposes is under way—day after day, month by month—determines the effectiveness of the learning environment.

It is inconceivable that clarifying purposes can go on separately from a variety of evaluation activities. Evaluation activities can be selected only after the purposes to be appraised are specified. As observations, samples of pupil work, exhibits, growth charts, tests and numerous other means are used, the process of identifying additional purposes is possible and is combined with the planning of clearly appropriate next steps. Herein lies the basis for effective evaluation.

Evaluation Involves Hypothesis-Making

As a teacher recognizes the values which are to give direction to his work and as he sees clearly some specific purposes to be achieved, he and the children then decide on appropriate procedures for realizing their purposes.

An opportunity to create an effective learning situation exists as hypotheses—hunches or guesses—are formulated. Evaluation seeks to arrive at judgments which can be supported by evidence. The process may require a hypothesis to secure needed evidence. As the process of testing the hypothesis is carried on, much data is gathered. The evidence may include a variety of types of material, such as test data, observations of children, checking by parents, case-study data, records and reports. These data make possible the testing of the hypothesis.

This process of hypothesis-making is not limited to the individual teacher. As teachers, pupils and parents formulate hypotheses to be tested, a strong force for program improvement is under way. Hypotheses may be developed in regard to school program or in regard to an individual's progress. For example:

As the school encourages cooperative program planning, parental participation in school activities is increased.

Evaluation
seeks to arrive
at judgments
supported by
evidence.

Formulating
hypotheses
gives meaning
to evaluation.

As emphasis is given to the development of human relations, growth in academic skills will be facilitated.

As John is given opportunity to achieve daily, he will become a better citizen in school.

Making hypotheses gives meaning to evaluation; thus, evaluation activities become needed, understood and consistent with sound problem-solving activities.

Teaching values, specific purposes, learning procedures and curriculum become closely interrelated. A learning environment so conceived is likely to be characterized by maturity, logic and interest. Students then feel that they are able to draw common-sense conclusions about things of importance.

Evaluation, the Center of Teaching

Evaluative
instruments
should be
diagnostic and
a means to
learning.

Sometimes the teaching of a given unit of work is evaluated only by a "test." Some instructors "teach" four days a week and "test" on Friday. However, evaluation in an effective learning environment is intrinsically a part of all teaching. Wise use of well-selected tests often helps teachers and pupils to diagnose needs, determine status and identify problems. When these instruments are selected in terms of clear purposes and when students consider them as a means to learning rather than as ends, the resulting data may be helpful.

An effective
learning
environment
requires
frequent
clarification
of ideas.

An effective learning environment is characterized by frequent attempts at clarification of ideas. This may be done through a diagram, a drawing, a discussion; through the reformulation of purpose or the extension of purpose; through informal class discussions; through program planning; through group appraisal of plans.

An effective learning environment requires continuous evaluation. The intelligent and continued use of procedures—which help teachers and children (a) to keep clearly in mind the job to be done, (b) to find appropriate ways of accomplishing the job, and (c) to set up next steps in bringing about improvement—is essential to growth.

Evaluation, A Cooperative Enterprise

The various elements in evaluation require a cooperative approach. An assumption is made that all individuals concerned should participate in deciding on evaluation procedures.

The element of participation often conditions the tone of environment. Learning becomes more effective as pupils, parents, teachers and administrators work together in "valuing," forming purposes and formulating hypotheses.

Too often, teachers alone judge the growth of their pupils. In some cases, parents and teachers together make judgments about a pupil's development. Sometimes, an administrator draws unwarranted conclusions about an individual or a group. The potential power of cooperative activity is important for a school. Teachers and children work together in a good learning environment. Not only is cooperative *planning* appropriate; cooperative *evaluation* is essential.

Evaluation, a Continuing Process

Often a teacher tells a group that a certain topic has been finished when, on a given Monday, a "new" problem is started. The impression is given that the purposes of the last week's work have been achieved and are considered quite separate from this week's work. It appears that the goals for each unit of work are regarded as entirely separate.

Teachers sometimes reduce to a symbol or quantitative grade all information gained during a school year about a given child. No effort is made to think of the year's work as an investment to be used in the future. Information collected during a year, evidences of pupil needs, observations of growth and the recognition of problems are not considered necessary for future planning. However, effective evaluation is not terminal in nature. It is a means of pushing ahead for improvement. As a teacher and a group of children honestly face the question, "How can we work better?" the need for evaluation is emphasized. A close relationship exists between learning and the extent to which pupils and groups are helped to determine appropriate next steps and means of improving their work.

Many schools have placed emphasis on the use of evaluative criteria. Both elementary and secondary teacher groups have engaged in programs of study using these criteria. Too often the important consideration is the determination of a rating rather than planning needed next steps in bringing about educational improvement.

Effective evaluation moves ahead in search of improvement.

Evaluation
should focus
on intelligent
improvement of
the school and
community.

A spirit of continuous improvement is a healthy one for a school faculty, for an individual teacher or for an individual child. Such a spirit keeps us alert to change. Often communities, or even teacher groups, tend to resist change with a notion that the schools of a generation ago were "good enough." As educators put into action the concept that evaluation should be focused toward helping the school and the community to bring about intelligent improvement, better community understanding, as well as better schools, will result.

Guiding Principles for Creating a Good Environment for Learning

Essentials of a Good Learning Environment

Everyone—educators, parents and other citizens—whose responsibility is the education of children should understand the essentials of a good learning environment and should recognize that:

1. The heart of the school program should be experiences which interest and challenge boys and girls. Vicarious experiences must be based on sufficient firsthand experiences to have meaning to the learners. Knowledge is important, but it must be related to action.

2. Many school experiences should be developed from the interests and concerns which boys and girls generate in the home and other out-of-school situations. Living and learning at school, in turn, should be designed to help the child to think and act better in his out-of-school living.

3. School experiences should be consistent with the physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual needs of children.

4. A controlling purpose must be that each child shall have the opportunity to grow and develop to his optimum. He needs to feel that he "belongs" and that he has the ability to achieve in areas considered important by his peers and by adults.

5. Differences in the way children learn and achieve must be recognized. Genuine respect for individual differences in all phases of personality and ability calls for an informal classroom atmosphere in which children learn from one another and where questions of boys and girls are welcomed by the teacher and other adults. Learning materials of varying degrees of difficulty are essential. Education is not regarded primarily as "ground to be covered," but rather as a means of meeting needs for effective living.

6. The criterion of achievement should be growth in desirable behavior characteristics—desirable action in performing the tasks of daily living now and in the future. The school must recognize its double responsibility of enabling the child to appreciate his

heritage and to assist the home, church and community in developing citizens capable of coping with tremendous current problems. The skills, knowledges, attitudes, values and understandings considered necessary for effective American citizenship must be given careful and specific consideration by adults in planning the educational program of schools. Experiences which best enable boys and girls to develop these characteristics should then be provided.

Success of the program should be evaluated in terms of actual change in the actions, the thinking, the behavior of boys and girls.

7. Evaluation, a process of decision-making that is indispensable to effective learning, should be an actual part of teaching. It includes determining values, identifying and clarifying purposes, and arriving at judgments which are supported by evidence. Evaluation, as a basic factor in developing a good learning environment, involves the intelligent and continued use of procedures which help teachers and children to keep clearly in mind (a) the job to be done, (b) appropriate ways of accomplishing the job, and (c) needed next steps in bringing about improvement.

The Environment for Learning Can Be Improved

School personnel, parents and other adults can do much to improve the learning environment.

1. Adults can realize that they are the most important part of the learning environment of children. They can recognize that there is no good substitute for teaching by example, and can learn to live and work together in a manner which exemplifies to children the best possible living and learning. By attaining self-understanding, adults become more aware of the effect of their behavior on growing boys and girls. Insights concerning the nature of mature behavior and how it can be achieved can be deepened and strengthened.

2. Adults can increase their understanding of the growth and development of children.

3. Schools should consider the impact of present-day life on boys and girls—the effect of television and other media of communication, the threats of totalitarianism and of war, and the results of increased urbanization of living. More can then be done to assure that school experiences are well-selected in meeting the needs of boys and girls.

4. Adults can become clearer on the implications to the learning environment of our American heritage—its privileges, opportunities and responsibilities. They should also understand the prob-

lems that must be solved if the democratic way of life is to be preserved and enhanced.

5. Schools should place more emphasis upon these points:

- a. Increased participation of children in planning, executing and evaluating results of their school work.
- b. Greater utilization of available resources—the children themselves, parents and citizens of the community, the institutions of the community, the best available books, magazines, and films and other visual aids.
- c. Maximum use of physical facilities—the classroom and the school plant. New buildings should be made functional. Older rooms and plants can be made more effective through effort and imagination.
- d. Improvement in methods of teaching through a better understanding of the learning process. A balance of individual, small-group, and whole-class activities should be sought. A permissive atmosphere in which children feel free to “act natural” will make it possible for adults to understand children and meet their needs. This is important enough to deserve much effort.

6. Long-range curriculum planning should aim at consistency of philosophy and practices throughout each school unit and the system as a whole. Policies should not evolve from administrative edict but through discussions of teachers, supervisors, administrators and other adults as to what constitutes a good learning environment and what needs to be done to develop it. An on-going evaluation program, in which the problem-solving approach is utilized, seems to offer the surest guarantee of continuous improvement in the environment for learning.

Educational Leadership Is Essential

Working within the principles outlined above, those charged with the responsibility for instructional leadership should help the classroom teacher in the following ways to develop a good environment for learning.

1. The supervisor¹ has an obligation to help the teacher to clarify his goals and procedures and through evaluation to discover where changes are needed. This help should not be limited to methods of teaching and of selecting subject matter; the supervisor should be able to assist the teacher to understand himself better, to understand his motivations and his values.

2. To be helpful to the classroom teacher, the supervisor should

¹The term “supervisor” as used here means consultant, coordinator and principal as well as supervisor—anyone in a position of instructional leadership.

be skilled in individual and group conference techniques. He should be able to demonstrate, in all his relationships with teachers, the principles of good teaching.

3. When the supervisor himself is not in a position to help teachers on a specific problem, he should know where to look for help and should go after it.

4. The supervisor should work towards helping the public, the Board of Education and professional workers whose primary responsibility is in administration to become more keenly sensitive to the needs of children and the requisites for a good learning environment.

This book attempts to give practical suggestions for creating a good learning environment. The teacher or supervisor who learns to think through and evaluate his work in terms of the most important goals for education will always continue to grow in his ability to create good learning situations for children. He will do this through discussions with his colleagues, acquaintanceship with research and participation in significant in-service education programs. Thus he will continue to make his greatest potential contribution as an educator.

The next quarter-century will be crucial for America. Will our way of life continue and become stronger? The quality of education found in the classrooms throughout our country will have much to do with the answer.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Resources for Creating a Good Learning Environment

This bibliography includes audio-visual materials and books and pamphlets dealing with the levels of education treated in the 1954 yearbook. They have been grouped under the following nine classifications relating to the development of a good learning environment:

- Understanding the child
- Investigating ways of learning
- Widening classroom horizons
- Providing physical facilities
- Finding and using materials
- Recognizing family and community influences
- Strengthening school-community understanding
- Evaluating pupil growth, the learning environment, and teaching techniques
- Fostering teacher growth.

We have been guided primarily in the selection of materials by their usefulness to supervisors and administrators in planning with teachers and by their value in suggesting other activities.

The limitations of space which a yearbook must impose have required that somewhat arbitrary standards be set in making the selections. As several excellent bibliographies have already listed earlier materials, only books and pamphlets issued since 1951 are given here except where very little material is available. Likewise, only the more recent audio-visual materials have been included. Because the main emphasis in each item is indicated by the classification in which it appears, there is no cross-listing. Many of the materials are useful in several of the classifications.

Understanding the Child

Publications

ASSOCIATION FOR SUPERVISION AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT. *Growing Up in an Anxious Age*. 1952 Yearbook. Washington, D. C.: the Association, a department of the National Education Association, 1952. 263 p.

Discusses factors in contemporary life which have emotional impact on boys and girls and points out their implications for the schools.

BAXTER, BERNICE. *Growth in Human Relations*. San Francisco: Harr Wagner, 1952. 102 p.

Includes sections on the child and his school experience, growth through group activities, community influences.

BUHLER, CHARLOTTE, and OTHERS. *Childhood Problems and the Teacher*. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1952. 372 p.

Approaches children's problems psychologically. Analyzes what the teacher can do to help.

GREEN, SIDNEY L., and ROTHENBERG, ALAN B. *A Manual of First Aid for Mental Health in Childhood and Adolescence*. New York: Julian Press, 1953. 278 p.

Suggests ways of meeting situations in which boys and girls need help with specific problems.

HARTLEY, RUTH E., and OTHERS. *Understanding Children's Play*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1952. 372 p.

Analyzes the kinds of play enjoyed by young children and the benefits derived from the various experiences.

HAVIGHURST, ROBERT J. *Human Development and Education*. New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1953. 338 p.

Summarizes the developmental tasks from early childhood to old age and indicates their implications for the school.

HEATON, MARGARET. *Feelings Are Facts*. New York: National Conference of Christians and Jews, 1952. 60 p.

Discusses the importance of feelings in the classroom, the diagnosis of children's feelings, ways in which a teacher may deal with feelings.

KUHLEN, RAYMOND G., and THOMPSON, GEORGE U. *Psychological Studies of Human Development*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1952.

Brings together abstracts of basic research on human development from birth to senescence with implications for education.

LANDIS, PAUL H. *Adolescence and Youth: The Process of Maturing*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1952. 461 p.

Includes adapting the school program to current needs of adolescents, to the school and to peer-group adjustments.

MALM, MARGUERITE, and JAMISON, OLIS C. *Adolescence*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1952. 512 p.

Defines the adolescent and indicates his many problems in adjustment. Develops the roles of home, community and school in his life.

MOHR, GEORGE J. *When Children Face Crises*. Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1952. 48 p.

Discusses situations critical for children. Suggests ways of easing crises.

REDL, FRITZ, and WEINMAN, DAVID. *Controls from Within*. Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1952. 332 p.

Suggests many techniques for helping the aggressive child re-establish controls whereby he may live comfortably with others.

STRANG, RUTH. *Helping Children Solve Problems*. Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1953. 48 p.

Analyzes the nature of children's problems, steps in problem solving, the role of the teacher, cooperative problem solving.

WHITING, JOHN W. M., and CHILD, IRVIN L. *Child Training and Personality: A Cross-Cultural Study*. New York: Yale University Press, 1953. 353 p.

Examines child-training practices in 75 different cultures and considers American practices in relation to these.

WITTY, PAUL. *Helping the Gifted Child*. Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1952. 48 p.

Defines the gifted: their personalities, their needs. Indicates ways of identifying the gifted and of helping them, both at home and school.

Physical

"Adolescent Development Series" (McGraw-Hill)

5 films and 5 follow-up filmstrips correlated with Hurlock: *Adolescent Development*.

Films and
Filmstrips



Early Adolescence: Age of Turmoil—20 minutes

Presents problems of young people from thirteen to fifteen years of age. Discusses behavior that reflects the emotional turmoil of this age, such as giggling, destructive criticism of school, and unrealistic ideas of their own future.

Meaning of Adolescence—16 minutes

Points out the unsure status of the adolescent and provides an over-view of the social, emotional, mental and physical changes occurring in the years between childhood and adulthood.

Meeting the Needs of Adolescence—19 minutes

Shows how a family meets the basic physical needs, stimulates the mental development, and guides the spiritual growth of its fourteen-year-old and its seventeen-year-old sons.

Physical Aspects of Puberty—19 minutes

Presents physiological aspects of puberty. Includes importance of the endocrine glands, the gonadotropic hormone, the development of the reproductive organs, and points out how these growth changes affect behavior in adolescents.

Social-Sex Attitudes in Adolescence—22 minutes

Presents the importance of the understanding of sex in teen-agers. A boy and girl are taken through their entire adolescent experience which culminates in their marriage.

Films **Heredity and Environment—10 minutes**
 (Coronet)

Shows examples of heredity and environment at work; gives an over-view of cultural inheritance, genetics, environmental influences, and their interrelations.

Your Children's Play—21 minutes
 (McGraw-Hill)

Illustrates how children learn by playing—how they acquire information, physical dexterity, and an understanding of the world about them and how play activities channel their emotional states.

Mental—Social—Emotional

Activity Group Therapy—50 minutes
 (ColumbiaUPress)

A variety of relationships exist within a group of emotionally disturbed and socially maladjusted boys, ages 10-11. The spontaneous, destructive and constructive behavior of the boys and the gradual improvement in their personalities under the guidance of a trained therapist are revealed in their behavior both within the group and outside of it.

Angry Boy—33 minutes
 (IntFlmBur)

The emotional disturbances of a boy who is caught stealing in school are, through psychiatric care, traced to their basic causes. Shows how unconscious motivation affects the behavior of both children and adults.

Crossroads of Life—33 minutes
 (UNFlmDiv)

Shows several children who have become juvenile delinquents and their

treatment in a children's institution. Stresses cooperation to improve methods of prevention, observation and treatment of delinquency.

Emotional Health—20 minutes
(McGraw-Hill)

1 film and 1 follow-up filmstrip.

Portrays problem of the college student who visits a doctor because he is worried about chest pains. Finding no physical cause, the doctor recommends consultation with a psychiatrist, who discovers a deep-rooted but suspected fear. After discussion, the student improves.

Mental Health—12 minutes
(EBF)

Presents the general problems of mental health and discusses four basic principles for maintaining good mental health; stresses the importance of mental health to the individual and to society.

"Mental Mechanisms Series"
(McGraw-Hill)

4 films visualizing case studies.

Feeling of Hostility—27 minutes

Dramatization of the factors producing resentment and hostility in personal relationships. The case history of a girl from early childhood through early adulthood. An attached trailer sums up the factors that have contributed to the girl's personality, her emotional inadequacy and the feeling of hostility in personal relationships.

Feeling of Rejection—23 minutes

Case history of a neurotic twenty-three-year-old girl who suffers from physical symptoms such as headaches, extreme fatigue and dizzy spells. Since no physical causes can be found, she consults a psychiatrist who is able to uncover the emotional basis for these physical reactions.

Feelings of Depression—30 minutes

Case history of a conscientious, hard-working business man in his early thirties, who suffers periods of great despondency. Uncovers the factors in his life which underlie this behavior and suggests that psychiatry may help him to understand himself and lead the way to a full, rich life.

Over-Dependency—32 minutes

Case history of Jimmy, a young married man, whose life is influenced by behavior patterns carried over from a too-dependent childhood. He is unable to face the ordinary problems of everyday life. He takes refuge in his illness, which has no physical cause, in the comfort of his mother, his sister and his wife.

Quiet One—67 minutes
(Athena)

Donald Peters, a mentally disturbed Negro boy, is an only child, and the victim of a disrupted home in the Harlem district of New York. At the age of ten, he is sent to the Wiltwyck School for delinquent boys. With the aid of the psychiatrist and counselors there, he receives the training and emotional comfort he needs to help him become a useful member of society.

Investigating Ways of Learning

Publications

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS. *American School Curriculum*. Washington, D. C.: the Association, a department of the National Education Association, 1953. 551 p.

Includes chapters on how children learn and grow, better aids to instruction, the teacher's role, public relations, evaluation.

ASSOCIATION FOR SUPERVISION AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT. *Action for Curriculum Improvement*. Washington, D. C.: the Association, a department of the National Education Association, 1951. 248 p.

Presents ways of working together for better educational programs and gives many illustrations of current practices.

DOUGLASS, HARL. *Secondary Education for Life Adjustment of American Youth*. New York: Ronald Press, 1952. 630 p.

Stresses types of training toward specific goals, as, for example, family living. Indicates trends in curriculum, teaching procedures.

GOLD, MILTON J. *Working to Learn*. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1951. 192 p.

Discusses various approaches to the secondary school program and gives details of many types of occupational experiences used as general education.

KELLEY, EARL C., and RASEY, MARIE I. *Education and the Nature of Man*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952. 209 p.

Deals with the motivations for action and the conditions which make it possible for the learner to release his energy for learning activity.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION, DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS. *Bases for Effective Learning*. Washington, D. C.: the Department, 1952. 390 p.

Includes chapters on point of view, administrative contributions, faculty and parent planning, public relations, ways of helping teachers, ways of working with children, the physical environment.

NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF EDUCATION. *Adapting the Secondary School Program to the Needs of Youth*. Vol. 52, Part 1. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953. 316 p.

Suggests ways of adapting the curriculum, extra-class activities, work experiences and classroom activities to the needs of youth.

NESBITT, MARION. *A Public School for Tomorrow: A Description of the Matthew F. Maury School, Richmond, Virginia*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953. 164 p.

Describes the changing of a traditional elementary school into a "School for Tomorrow" by working first toward a happier environment and then achieving less formal methods and a functional curriculum.

RASEY, MARIE I. *It Takes Time*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953. 204 p.

Indicates the changes which have taken place in educational practice during 50 years by telling the story of one teacher from childhood to retirement. Emphasizes contemporary principles and practice.

SHANE, HAROLD G., editor. *The American Elementary School*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953. 434 p.

Includes chapters on the dynamics of learning, concepts of child growth and their relationship to classroom practice, changes in curriculum, teaching materials and better learning, experimental centers, new practices.

STRATEMEYER, FLORENCE B., and OTHERS. *Guides to a Curriculum for Modern Living*. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1952. 60 p.

Stresses the relationship between an effective curriculum and life situations. Lists many student problems and experiences which may help to meet these situations.

"Educational Psychology Series"
(McGraw-Hill)

5 films and 5 follow-up filmstrips correlated with Sorenson: *Psychology in Education*.

Films and
Filmstrips

Importance of Goals—21 minutes

Case of thirteen-year-old Tommy illustrates the principle that all education is essentially a process of attaining basic, meaningful goals.

Individual Differences—23 minutes

Case study of a shy, slow child who is different from his classmates and from his older, socially adept brother. Points out that it is the job of the teacher to know his pupils and to work toward meeting each child's needs.

Motivating the Class—19 minutes

A student teacher of mathematics learns that motivation is basic to good teaching and that for the work to be meaningful to young people it must be related to their interests and experiences.

Problem of Pupil Adjustment, Part 1: The Drop-Out—20 minutes

Shows characteristics of the high school program which led Steve Martin to leave school as soon as the law permitted. A life adjustment program, with class subjects related to the interests of boys and girls, is suggested as a preventive for drop-outs.

Problem of Pupil Adjustment, Part 2: The Stay-In—10 minutes

The problem of drop-outs is solved when pupil needs are met by a school program that stresses learning to adjust to everyday living. Classes in poultry raising, aviation, driving, English, biology and civics are shown.

Squeak, the Squirrel—10 minutes

(Churchill-Wexler)

Shows how an animal learns. Squeak learns to find food in hidden and unaccustomed places.

Films

Willie and the Mouse—10 minutes

(TFC)

A comparative study which shows that experiments with laboratory mice have implications for educational procedures in the classroom.

Wilson Dam School—20 minutes

(TVA)

Shows a typical day at the Wilson Dam Elementary School, Tennessee Valley, Alabama. Explains how children learn in a classroom situation. In this school every child takes an active part.

Widening Classroom Horizons

Publications

APPLEGATE, MAUREE. *Everybody's Business—Our Children*. Evanston, Ill.: Row, Peterson and Co., 1952. 310 p.

Treats informally and with much anecdotal material the planning of the school day, the development of a unit, experiences in critical reading, stimulating interest in communication, self-evaluation for parents and teachers.

ASSOCIATION FOR CHILDHOOD EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL. *Helping Children Live and Learn*. Washington, D. C.: the Association, 1952.

Describes school experiences conducive to the growth of children and lists helpful materials.

BARTKY, JOHN A. *Supervision as Human Relations*. Boston: D. C. Heath, 1953. 308 p.

Treats the administration of a school program and classroom procedures from the standpoint of interpersonal relationships.

BEAUCHAMP, MARY, and OTHERS. *Building Brotherhood: What Can Elementary Schools Do?* New York: National Conference of Christians and Jews, 1953. 64 p.

Describes such classroom techniques as sociometric procedures, open questions, diaries and logs, three wishes, role-playing.

BRAMMELL, P. ROY. *Your Schools and Mine*. New York: Ronald Press, 1952. 438 p.

Presents a broad picture of education, including chapters on learning-teaching relationships, evaluation, school-community relationships.

BROWN, EDWIN JOHN. *Managing the Classroom*. New York: Ronald Press, 1952. 424 p.

Presents the principles of classroom management, including management for pupil growth, problems in organization, the teacher and the learning situation.

BURROWS, ALVINA TREUT. *Teaching Children in the Middle Grades*. Boston: D. C. Heath and Co., 1952. 280 p.

Summarizes characteristics of middle childhood. Discusses content and procedures in subject areas. Includes developing the skills and growth in creativity.

CUNNINGHAM, RUTH, and OTHERS. *Understanding Group Behavior of Boys and Girls*. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1951. 446 p.

Discusses the principles of group interaction as applied to the classroom. Includes much material on the individual's relationship to the group and many techniques for improving interpersonal relationships in school situations.

GANS, ROMA, and OTHERS. *Teaching Young Children*. Yonkers-on-the-Hudson, N. Y.: World Book Co., 1952. 454 p.

Discusses the organizing, planning and evaluation of learning experiences in nursery school, kindergarten and primary grades.

GRAMBS, JEAN D., and IVERSON, WILLIAM J. *Modern Methods in Secondary Education*. New York: William Sloane Associates, 1952. 562 p.

Supplies the beginning teacher with many practical suggestions for meeting classroom problems.

JUNIOR TOWN MEETING LEAGUE. *Youth Discussion: Patterns and Techniques*. Columbus, Ohio: Junior Town Meeting League, 1953, 32 p.

Develops ways of working in discussion groups in the classroom.

KLAUSMEIER, HERBERT J. *Principles and Practices of Secondary School Teaching*. New York: Harper and Brothers. 1953. 521 p.

Discusses goals, the contemporary school program, unit planning, activities, individual and group work, work methods, creativity, morale and discipline, evaluation.

KUMPF, CARL H., *The Adaptable School*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1952. 180 p.

Analyzes the procedures by which an administrative staff may maintain and support a flexible school program.

Camping Education—35 minutes—color
(LifeCamps)

Films

Presents experiences in organized camping activities for elementary grades. Each sixth-grade child experiences one week of camping education as part of the school program.

A Child Went Forth—20 minutes
(Brandon)

Shows children in activities designed to cultivate self-reliance and independence. Children learn self-discipline, to live with one another, to build things and to develop their creative instincts.



Children Learning by Experience—40 minutes

(UW-Educ)

Shows that children want to learn, enjoy practicing simple skills, strive to understand the world around them, and that they learn things by play and by imagination.

A Class for Tommy—20 minutes

(Bailey)

Typical day in the life of a mentally handicapped child; includes a visit with Tommy's parents showing the close cooperation and understanding between the school and the home.

First Lessons—22 minutes

(IntFlmBur)

Shows how a class is affected by the behavior of an aggressive child and how the teacher handles the situations which develop.

Learning Through Cooperative Planning—20 minutes

(TchrsCol)

How elementary school children can acquire one of the most important skills of our modern times—effective participation as members of a group.

Near Home—25 minutes

(IntFlmBur)

Illustrates several basic principles of good teaching. A class and teacher study the community in which they live. Shows pupils and teacher in a learning situation that capitalizes on an inherent interest in things near by and approaches the learning through problem solving.

Our Town Is Our Classroom—21 minutes

(UW-Govt)

Boys and girls learn about the government of their town by visiting council meetings, the court, and by taking part in meetings between citizens and local officials.

Passion for Life—85 minutes

(Brandon)

Based on a true incident concerning the new schoolmaster in Salezes, Provence, France, who finds a dirty classroom, sullen students and disgruntled townspeople. After many disappointments and failures, he gains the confidence of the boys and girls and of the village people by having them work together on school projects. French narration, English titles.

Practicing Democracy in the Classroom—22 minutes

(EBF)

Shows teaching methods which not only develop subject matter but also provide opportunity for practicing democratic processes. Stresses methods which develop and draw upon the knowledge, skills and attitudes of the students.

School in Centreville—20 minutes

(NatEdAssn-Rural)

Shows how education in rural schools can be geared to the problems of learning to live in the community. Students work on projects which relate to their present needs and their future roles in the community. The three R's are not neglected, but are integrated into study and activity.

***The School—The Child's Community*—15 minutes**
(WayneU)

Shows how one school attempts to help children and youth understand society and learn to live effectively in it. Intended for use with in-service and pre-service teachers. Also good for use with parents to interpret to them a phase of social education which they sometimes misunderstand.

***We Plan Together*—20 minutes**
(TchrsCol)

Designed to help teachers gain a better understanding of cooperative planning between teachers and students. Shows an eleventh-grade group planning and working together in their core class over a period of several months.

***Bringing the Community into the Classroom*—45 frames**
(WayneU)

Shows ways in which one teacher called upon the community to teach a specific unit of work. Also illustrates how other teachers can bring community resources to the school to increase interest and effectiveness.

***Centreville Through the Eyes of a Camera*—40 frames**
(Franseth)

Shows boys and girls in Centreville, Virginia, learning ways of getting information and using what they learned. Supplements the film *School in Centreville*.

***Field Trip*—26 frames**
(Simmel-Meservey)

Uses a trip to the airport as the means of outlining steps to be taken in planning and completing a successful field trip.

***Making Field Trips Effective*—46 frames**
(WayneU)

Points out the purposes which field trips serve and suggests procedures which should be followed in planning and in making the trips.

Providing Physical Facilities

AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION. *Things to Consider in Planning Educational Plants*. Series VII, School Plant Research, No. 4. Washington, D. C.: the Council, 1948. 17 p.

Lists the major items to consider in creating school buildings which will function effectively.

COUNCIL OF SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS, NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION OF DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS. *A Guide for Community Participation in Planning for School Building Needs*. Albany: New York University, 1949. 27 p.

Supplies a summary and a check list for laymen on each of four problems: the nature of the community, its educational needs, kinds of buildings to meet these needs, ways of providing the buildings.

ENGELHARDT, N. L., and OTHERS. *Planning Elementary School Buildings*. New York: F. W. Dodge Corp., 1953. 268 p.

Gives detailed attention to the physical facilities of the elementary school program. Includes planning for the use of school buildings for community groups.

Filmstrips

Publications

ENGELHARDT, N. L., and OTHERS. *Planning Secondary School Buildings*. New York: Reinhold Publishing Corp. 1949. 252 p.

Gives detailed attention to the physical facilities for all phases of the secondary school program.

STONEMAN, MERLE A. *Planning and Modernizing the School Plant*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1949. 328 p.

Relates the plant to community needs, considering especially the small community. Suggests steps in evaluating and improving existing plants.

THURSTON, LEE M. *Planning Together for Better School Buildings*. Bulletin 412. Lansing: Michigan Department of Public Instruction, 1950. 141 p.

Covers the details of a building program, including legal matters, site, buildings to meet educational needs, safety and engineering equipment.

WAECHTER, HEINRICH and ELISABETH. *Schools for the Very Young*. New York: F. W. Dodge Corp., 1951. 197 p.

Discusses pre-schools: their characteristics, procedures, relationship to the community. Illustrates problems of layout and design, utilization of outdoor space, various technological matters.

Films *Leaders for Leisure*—21 minutes
(AssnFilms)

Depicts an average town planning a recreational program. Trained leaders are hired to survey the needs of the children and adults and set up plans and objectives for the total program.

Schools March On—18 minutes
(MOT)

Shows what happened in one mid-western county when out-moded, one-room schools were eliminated by reorganization and consolidation. New well-equipped and well-staffed schools resulted.

Finding and Using Materials

Publications CHILDREN'S MUSIC CENTER. *Children's Records and Books*. Los Angeles: Children's Music Center, 1952. 17 p.

Lists of children's records arranged by grade levels and units of study.

DALE, EDGAR. *Audio-Visual Methods in Teaching*. Revised edition. New York: Dryden Press, 1954. 546 p.

Reviews types of materials, methods and materials for the subject areas, evaluating materials, producing materials.

DUNN, ANITA and OTHERS. *Fare for the Reluctant Reader*. Revised edition. Albany: New York State College for Teachers, 1952. 167 p.

An annotated bibliography of books chosen especially for adolescents who are reluctant to read.

EAST, MARJORIE and DALE, EDGAR. *Display for Learning: Making and Using Visual Materials*. New York: Dryden Press, 1952. 306 p.

Discusses functions of displays, materials, design in displays, processes and kinds, appraisal of displays.

HAAAS, KENNETH B., and PACKER, HARRY Q. *Preparation and Use of Audio-Visual Aids*. New York: Prentice-Hall, 1950. 327 p.

Covers a wide range of materials and their classroom use. Includes sources.

KINDER, JAMES S. *Audio-Visual Materials and Techniques*. New York: American Book Co., 1950. 624 p.

Discusses materials, techniques, administration of an audio-visual program.

KINNEY, LUCIEN, and DRESDEN, KATHERINE. *Better Learning Through Current Materials*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1952. 215 p.

Reports helpful practices in the use of current materials in the classroom.

LEVENSON, WILLIAM B., and STASHEFF, EDWARD. *Teaching Through Radio and Television*. New York: Rinehart and Co., 1952. 560 p.

Discusses the preparation of programs, their instructional uses, their evaluation.

MILLER, BRUCE. *Sources of Free Pictures*. Riverside, Calif.: Bruce Miller, 1953. 28 p.

Includes sources of travel posters and pictures, and magazine pictures suitable for using with units of work.

MILLER, BRUCE. *Sources of Free and Inexpensive Pictures for the Classroom*. Riverside, Calif.: Bruce Miller, 1952. 32 p.

Lists of sources of pictures designed to help teachers at all levels develop their own picture files.

NEW YORK GRAPHIC SOCIETY. *Fine Art Reproductions—Old and Modern Masters*. Greenwich, Conn.: the Society, 1951. 391 p.

Catalog of art reproductions of old and modern artists.

U. S. OFFICE OF PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES. *Mental Health Motion Pictures*. Publication No. 218. Washington: Federal Security Agency, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1952. 124 p.

Lists and annotates many helpful films. Suggests suitable audiences for each and sources from which films may be obtained.

WITTICH, WALTER ARNO, and SCHULLER, CHARLES FRANCIS. *Audio-Visual Materials: Their Nature and Use*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953. 564 p.

Analyzes many types of materials and the contribution they can make to the classroom.

How to Make Handmade Lantern Slides—21 minutes
(IndU)

Films

Shows steps in preparing six types of handmade lantern slides. Demonstrates how to make slides for use on various grade levels.

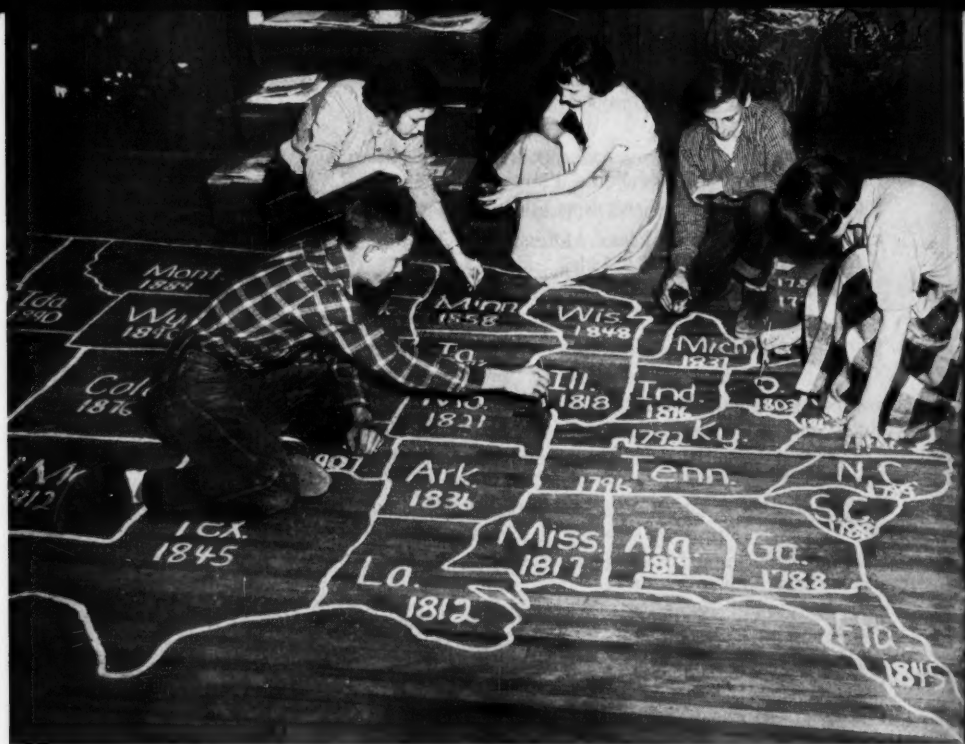
New Tools for Learning—18 minutes
(EBF)

Demonstrates values of the use of audio visual materials in the classroom.

How to Keep Your Bulletin Board Alive—32 frames
(OhioStateU)

Filmstrips

Points out weaknesses in bulletin boards and gives information on captions, illustrations, colors, layout and materials to use.



Recognizing Family and Community Influences

Publications

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION, DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS. *Human Values in the Elementary School*. Washington, D. C.: the Department, 1952. 95 p.

Explores values held in America, relates them to school procedures.

GRAMBS, JEAN. *Group Processes in Intergroup Education*. New York: National Conference of Christians and Jews, 1953. 82 p.

Indicates ways of working toward better understanding in school and community groups.

GRUENBERG, SIDONIE MATSNER, and OTHERS. *Our Children Today*. New York: Viking Press, 1952. 366 p.

Discusses the child in our society and the influences upon him through adolescence. Stresses the role of the family, the school and the culture.

HYMES, JAMES L., JR. *Understanding Your Child*. New York: Prentice-Hall, 1952. 188 p.

Shows how the child develops in living with his family.

ROBBINS, FLORENCE GREENHOE. *Educational Sociology: A Study in Child, Youth, School, and Community*. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1953. 513 p.

Deals with the social and cultural orientation of the child.

THOMSON, MARY M. *Talk It Out with Your Child*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1953. 277 p.

Develops the role of the family in the growth of a child's understandings.

TRAGER, HELEN G., and YARROW, MARIAN RADKE. *They Learn What They Live*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952. 392 p.

Reports a study of prejudice in young children and suggests school procedures to improve attitudes.

WARNER, W. LLOYD. *American Life: Dream and Reality*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953. 268 p.

Explores phases of American life which have impact on children and adults.

Children's Emotions—22 minutes
(McGraw-Hill)

Films

Discusses the major emotions of childhood: fear, anger, jealousy, curiosity and joy. Points out what the parent can do to lessen fears and promote the child's happiness and natural development.

Families First—17 minutes
(NYSTDptComm)

Shows everyday episodes in the lives of two contrasting families. Demonstrates the causes of tension, frustrations and anti-social attitudes.

The Family—20 minutes
(UW-Govt)

Shows how the daily problems confronting a family are solved when each member understands the needs and desires of other members.

Family Affair—19 minutes
(TFC)

Convinced that he is doing his duty, a judge issues a restraining order preventing construction of an aqueduct. Many in the community disagree, and both his son and daughter are deeply hurt when they find that his action has disastrous effects on their friendships.

Family Circles—31 minutes
(McGraw-Hill)

Stresses the importance of the cooperation of home and school. The experiences of three children illustrate how parental indifference, lack of imagination, and emotional conflict at home destroy the confidence and enthusiasm necessary for a child's success at school.

Family Life—10 minutes
(Coronet)

A family begins to enjoy life through proper home management of schedules, responsibilities, privileges and finances.

Farewell to Childhood—20 minutes
(IntFlmBur)

Story of a teenager who wants independence and the privileges of adulthood, while at the same time she fears them. Her parents are bewildered and confused as they try to understand her inconsistencies. Stresses the help of the school counselor in working with Susan and her parents.

Fears of Children—29 minutes (IntFlmBur)

Paul's fear of the dark, of being alone and of new situations is related to his feelings about his parents. These feelings are common to children of his age. Parents must neither be over-protective nor over-severe. Through the help of a friend, Paul's mother and father begin to develop attitudes which eventually can keep them from adding to the emotional burdens of their child.

Life with Junior—18 minutes
(MOT)

A typical day for Junior. Follows him through his sketchy ablutions, a gulped breakfast and a dawdling trip to school. The work of the Child Study Association of America is shown in some detail.

Palmour Street—27 minutes
(HealthPubInst)

Shows events in the lives of Negro families to illustrate certain basic concepts of mental health and ways that parents influence the mental and emotional development of their children.

Roots of Happiness—25 minutes
(IntFlmBur)

Tells the story of a Puerto Rican family stressing the elements that make for happy family living. Centers around the father's role in helping his children grow into adulthood to become good citizens and good parents.

Shy Guy—12 minutes
(Coronet)

Shows the efforts of a shy adolescent boy as he tries to improve his social relations through friendly association with better adjusted young people.

Shyness—15 minutes
(McGraw-Hill)

Presents the problem of shyness in three children, discusses and shows how, through greater understanding by parents and teachers, this problem can be dealt with successfully.

Feature Films

Several feature-length films presenting problems of family backgrounds and community life are now available as rentals to schools in 16 mm. from Films Incorporated. Here are several titles.

Broken Arrow—1½ hours

Deals with the conflict between Apaches and white settlers in Arizona, and the making of an agreement which permitted mail riders to cross Indian lands.

Gentlemen's Agreement—2 hours

Studies the problems of prejudice by indicating the situations which confront a young man who pretends to be of Jewish ancestry.

The Late George Apley—1½ hours

Deals with the age-old conflict between the generations, heightened by the clash between custom-bound Boston and the outside world.

Pinky—2 hours

Considers problems of a girl whose Negro ancestry is not apparent from her appearance, of her conflicting loyalties and her thwarted affections.

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn—2 hours

Follows a girl's struggle to educate herself and to overcome the limitations of a poverty-stricken environment.

Kindergarten and Your Child—40 frames

(WayneU)

Filmstrips

Suggests ways in which the home can prepare the young child for school and assist in his educational growth.

"The Ways of Mankind"

(Nat'l Assn Ed Brdcstrs)

Recordings

An album of thirteen radio programs exploring the origin and development of cultures, customs and folkways of peoples in various parts of the world. The titles in the series include:

A Word in Your Ear (a study in language)

Stand-In for a Murderer (a study in culture)

Desert Soliloquy (a study in education)

When Greek Meets Greek (a study in values)

The Sea Lion Flippers (a study in ethics)

Sticks and Stones (a study in religion)

Legend of the Long House (a study in authority)

You Are Not Alone (a study of groups)

All the World's a Stage (a study in status and role)

Home Sweet Home (a study in family)

Survival (a study in technology)

I Know What I Like (a study in art)

Museum of Man (a summary).

Strengthening School-Community Understanding

CARY, STURGES F. *New Challenges to Our Schools*. New York: H. W. Wilson Co., 1953. 214 p.

Publications

Makes available contemporary comment on the schools from popular sources. Consists chiefly of definitions of contemporary programs and opinions concerning certain phases of the program.

FINE, BENJAMIN. *Educational Publicity*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1951. 561 p.

Covers the administration and procedures of a school's publicity program.

HYMES, JAMES L., JR. *Effective Home-School Relations*. New York: Prentice-Hall, 1953. 264 p.

Discusses the contribution which good home-school relations can make to the welfare of the child and suggests many procedures for bringing the home and school together.

JENKINS, DAVID, and LIPPITT, RONALD. *Interpersonal Perceptions of Teachers, Students, and Parents*. Washington, D. C.: Division of Adult Education Service, National Education Association, 1951. 119 p.

Reports the findings of a research project which investigated the attitudes parents, teachers and students had toward one another and suggests problems which might be worked on in communities.

MELBY, ERNEST O., and PUNER, MORTON, editors. *Freedom and Public Education*. New York: Praeger, 1953. 314 p.

Supplies brief materials from many sources which relate to current issues in education and the concerns of lay groups about the schools.

NATIONAL SCHOOL PUBLIC RELATIONS ASSOCIATION. *It Starts in the Classroom: A Public Relations Handbook for Classroom Teachers*. Washington, D. C.: a department of the National Education Association, 1951. 64 p.

Discusses the teacher's role in interpreting the school to the pupil, the home and the community.

NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF EDUCATION. *The Community School*. Vol. 52, Part II. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953. 292 p.

Explores many aspects of school-community relationships and the kind of school which serves its community.

YEAGER, WILLIAM A. *School-Community Relations*. New York: Dryden Press, 1951. 464 p.

Indicates the responsibilities of the school in interpreting the program plus desirable procedures, cooperating community agencies.

Films and Filmstrips

"American Public Education Series" (McGraw-Hill)

2 films and 2 follow-up filmstrips.

Design of American Public Education—16 minutes

Explains the organization of the American democratic school system as opposed to an autocratic system; presents a philosophy of education which strives to develop responsible citizens in a democratic society.



The School and the Community—14 minutes

Discusses the problem of separation between the school and the community. Indicates that teachers, parents, school officials and the citizenry share responsibility for bringing them together. Shows the benefits which the school and the community gain when they cooperate.

Education for Democracy—22 minutes

(MissouriStTeachers)

Sets forth the purposes behind current methods and practices of the public schools at all levels.

Films

Learning Democracy Through School-Community Projects—20 minutes

(EdFlmServ)

Shows how typical public schools and communities in Michigan are providing opportunities for both young people and adults to participate in special projects involving democratic procedures.

Playtown, U.S.A.—23 minutes

(AssnFlms)

Practical suggestions for community groups on how to organize all-age recreational programs for their needs.

Pop Rings the Bell—23 minutes

(NatSchServInst)

Presents the story of a high school principal who interprets the work of his school to members of the community.

Schools and the Community—25 minutes

(MOT)

Demonstrates the role of the schools in preparing boys and girls for work in the communities in which they live. Takes Portland, Maine, with its many seaport activities and an agricultural area in the Middle West as typical examples of how students learn to take their places in communities and industries.

Skippy and the 3R's—29 minutes

(NatEdAssn—Prs&RadioSect)

Dramatic account of how an understanding first-grade teacher builds on the children's interests in teaching the 3R's.

Let's Take a Look at Teaching—50 frames

(WayneU)

Sound version also available—(recorded narration)—75 frames

Information on teaching presented in two parts—(1) an over-view of teaching today and factors that make the profession a highly desirable vocational choice, (2) a representative school day in the life of a teacher.

Filmstrips

The Teacher and Public Relations—50 frames

(NatEdAssn-PubRel)

Based on the handbook *It Starts in the Classroom*. Emphasizes the importance of school-community groups working together.

Evaluating Pupil Growth, the Learning Environment, and Teaching Techniques

Publications

ASSOCIATION FOR SUPERVISION AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT. *Better Than Rating: New Approaches to Appraisal of Teaching Services*. Washington, D. C.: the Association, a department of the National Education Association, 1950. 83 p.

Discusses practices in the rating of teachers; suggests cooperative appraisals, which include teachers, as a way of achieving professional growth.

CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION. *Evaluating Pupil Progress*. Sacramento: the Department, 1952. 184 p.

Summarizes kinds of appraisals, techniques for appraising behavior, and procedures for reporting pupil progress.

COOPERATIVE STUDY OF SECONDARY-SCHOOL STANDARDS. *Evaluative Criteria*. Washington, D. C.: Cooperative Study of Secondary-School Standards, 1950. 305 p.

Supplies criteria for self-evaluation by a secondary school staff. Includes pupil population and school community, pupil needs, program of studies, etc.

FROELICH, CLIFFORD P., and DARLEY, JOHN G. *Studying Students: Guidance Methods of Individual Analysis*. Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1952. 411 p.

Describes techniques for obtaining and recording data about pupils.

LANDES, JACK, and SUMPTION, MERLE R. *Citizens Workbook for Evaluating School Buildings*. Dubuque, Iowa: William C. Brown Co., 1951. 39 p.

Consists of score sheets for appraising physical facilities.

ODELL, C. W. *Standards for the Evaluation of Elementary School Buildings*. Ann Arbor, Mich.: Edwards Brothers, 1950. 62 p.

Discusses site, gross structure, academic and special classrooms, general service provisions, service systems. Includes a detailed score card for evaluation.

SHANE, HAROLD G., and MC SWAIN, E. T. *Evaluation and the Elementary Curriculum*. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1951. 477 p.

Supplies practical ways of appraising many phases of the school program, including subject matter areas, the teaching of values, administrative and organizational procedures, current problems in curriculum.

SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS COMMISSION ON RESEARCH AND SERVICE. *Evaluating the Elementary School*. Atlanta, Georgia: Southern Association's Cooperative Study in Elementary Education, 1951. 325 p.

Provides criteria in the areas of values, functions of the school curriculum and methods, physical resources and personnel, planning by school personnel and by the community.

SUMPTION, MERLE R. *How to Conduct a Citizens School Survey*. New York: Prentice-Hall, 1952. 209 p.

Suggests procedures for obtaining a committee, gathering data, analyzing information, using the results.

YAUCH, WILBUR A. *How Good Is Your School?* New York: Harper and Brothers, 1951. 213 p.

Suggests factors for parents to consider in evaluating their child's school.

Education Is Good Business—10 minutes (GenPicProd)

Films

Comparison of two towns, a prosperous one with well-supported schools and well-trained young people who are an asset to the community and a less prosperous one with little support of schools and few opportunities for young people. Points out the relationship between schools and standard of living.

Schoolhouse in the Red—42 minutes (EBF)

Contrasts the activities of a typical one-room school with those of a consolidated school and shows how one community went about solving the questions of what would be best for the children.

Your Educational Philosophy. Does It Matter?—40 frames (WayneU)

Filmstrips

Presents views of the classrooms of two teachers, one traditional and one permissive in procedures, and raises questions concerning practice.

Fostering Teacher Growth

ADAMS, HAROLD D., and DICKEY, FRANK G. *Basic Principles of Supervision*. American Book Co., 1953. 320 p.

Publications

Discusses established practices for the average classroom.



ALLEN, JACK, editor. *The Teacher of the Social Studies*. Washington, D. C.: National Council for the Social Studies, a department of the National Education Association, 1952. 248 p.

Includes chapters on successful teaching, preparation of teachers, the classroom and its climate, the teacher in the community, professional growth.

ARMSTRONG, AARON W. *Your New Job—An Orientation Pamphlet*. Eugene: University of Oregon, 1952. 25 p.

Points out to the beginning teacher the characteristics of the profession.

BARD, HARRY. *Teachers and the Community: An In-Service Program in Action*. New York: National Conference of Christians and Jews, 1952. 56 p.

Advocates community study as a way of increasing teacher understanding of boys and girls and suggests the procedures for such a program.

BOARDMAN, CHARLES W., and OTHERS. *Democratic Supervision in Secondary Schools*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1953. 557 p.

Considers the nature and organization of supervision, techniques for improving instruction, types of supervisory services, evaluating the supervisory program.

BOSSING, NELSON L. *Teaching in Secondary Schools*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1952. 558 p.

Includes organization of curriculum, methods and techniques, the teacher's role in education.

BRIGGS, THOMAS H., and JUSTMAN, JOSEPH. *Improving Instruction Through Supervision*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1952. 523 p.

Considers in detail the role of the supervisor in the contemporary educational program.

BURTON, WILLIAM H. *The Guidance of Learning Activities*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1952. 737 p.

Summarizes the principles of teaching and indicates how they are based upon the growth of the learner.

CARTWRIGHT, DORWIN, and ZANDER, ALVIN. *Group Dynamics*. Evanston, Illinois: Row, Peterson and Co., 1953. 642 p.

Presents the findings of recent research on group processes, including group cohesiveness, group pressures and standards, group goals and locomotion, structural properties of groups, leadership.

COOPERATIVE PROGRAM IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION. *The Workshop Handbook*. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1953. 65 p.

Illustrates types of workshops, preparations for a workshop, effective procedures, ways of evaluating results.

COREY, STEPHEN M. *Action Research to Improve School Practices*. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1953. 161 p.

Differentiates action research from traditional methods by which educators design and carry out their own research studies to make better decisions and engage in more effective school practices.

KENWORTHY, LEONARD S. *World Horizons for Teachers*. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1952. 141 p.

Contains chapters on teacher education: developing skills in human relations, appreciations of their own country and culture as well as of other countries and cultures. Includes methods and materials.

RUGG, HAROLD. *The Teacher of Teachers: Frontiers of Theory and Practice in Teacher Education*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952. 308 p.

Discusses the philosophy and methods of teacher education. Includes a large section on the frontiers of practice.

MACOMBER, FREEMAN G. *Teaching in the Modern Secondary School*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1952. 348 p.

Covers many aspects of classroom teaching: unit planning, democratic controls, materials, evaluation.

MACCONNELL, CHARLES M., and OTHERS. *New Schools for a New Culture*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952. 196 p.

Recounts the organization and procedures used by Evanston Township High School in its core program.

MIEL, ALICE, and OTHERS. *Cooperative Procedures in Learning*. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1952. 512 p.

Reports practices in pupil-teacher planning by describing specific situations in which teachers and children planned together.

MELVIN, A. GORDON. *General Methods of Teaching*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1952. 251 p.

Describes ways of teaching which can be used at all levels. Includes classroom controls, ways of evaluating progress.

SCHNEIDER, ELSA. *How Children and Teacher Work Together*. Washington, D. C.: U. S. Office of Education, Federal Security Agency, 1952. 24 p.

Shows ways of establishing rapport and guiding children into productive and happy living.

SHAFTTEL, GEORGE, and FANNIE R. *Role Playing the Problem Story*. National Conference of Christians and Jews, 1952. 78 p.

Gives detailed help in the use of role-playing as a classroom aid for understanding the attitudes and values of children. Supplies stories for use in posing problems or situations.

STEPHENS, ADA DAWSON. *Providing Developmental Experiences for Young Children*. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1952. 107 p.

Suggests many kinds of experiences for children: with creative materials, language and literature, music, science, field trips. Discusses the role of the teacher.

WILES, KIMBALL. *Teaching for Better Schools*. New York: Prentice-Hall, 1952. 397 p.

Emphasizes fundamental ways of creating the environment for efficient learning—the human relations aspects, group controls, evaluation, individualization of instruction, teacher growth and cooperation.



WRIGHT, GRACE S. *Core Curriculum Development: Problems and Practices*. U. S. Office of Education, Federal Security Agency, Bulletin 1952, No. 5. Washington, D. C.: Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, 1952. 104 p.

Defines various types of core programs, subjects and activities commonly included, major problems in operating a core program.

Films *Children Are Creative*—10 minutes—color
(Bailey)

Stresses the importance of the child's innate creative ability. Demonstrates that the teacher's work is to stimulate and develop the child's creativity by providing an interesting environment, new techniques, stimulating ideas.

Helping Children Discover Arithmetic—20 minutes
(WayneU)

Shows how arithmetic can be taught to third graders by the discovery approach method. Children work individually and in groups as they are able to build understanding and skill.

Preparation of Teachers—20 minutes
(UW-Govt)

Shows teacher training at Ball State Teachers College, Muncie, Indiana. Emphasizes learning to understand children and providing for individual differences. Stresses the need for desirable personality traits in teachers.

Role Playing in Guidance—14 minutes
(UCLA)

The film shows how role-playing is introduced by the teacher, how the role-playing situation is conducted, what techniques can be used to vary the effectiveness of the training, and how an auxiliary helper can be introduced.

Role Playing in Human Relations—25 minutes
(NatEdAssn—AdultEd)

Shows the skills required for role-playing: How to take an inventory of problems, how to select one problem, how to set up, get under way, and stop a role-playing scene, how to lead a discussion after the role-playing.

Spelling and Learning—16 minutes
(UnivSouthernCalif)

Shows that motivation is essential to learning and that spelling requires strong incentives and meaningful context for children to learn efficiently.

The Teacher—17 minutes
(EBF)

Tells the story of Julia Whitaker, a teacher who is offered another job. She decides to remain in teaching. Emphasizes the place of the teacher in training future citizens.

"Teacher Education Series"
(McGraw-Hill)

5 films and 5 follow-up filmstrips correlated with Schorling:
Student Teaching

Learning to Understand Children, Part 1: A Diagnostic Approach
—21 minutes

Presents the case study of an emotionally and socially maladjusted girl of fifteen. Includes diagnostic techniques, such as observation of her behavior, study of her previous records, personal interviews, home visitation, and recommendations for remedial measures.

Learning to Understand Children, Part 2: A Remedial Program
—23 minutes

A continuation of the case study of the maladjusted girl in which the teacher develops a plan for remedial action by making use of the girl's talent in art.

Maintaining Classroom Discipline—14 minutes

Explores the fundamentals of controlling class conduct and developing attitudes. Contrasting methods of handling a class are demonstrated.

Broader Concept of Method, Part 1: Developing Pupil Interest
—19 minutes

Presents a typical conventional, teacher-dominated, lesson-hearing type of recitation, and shows effects on student attitudes, responses and learning.

Broader Concept of Method, Part 2: Teacher and Pupils Planning and Working Together—19 minutes

Students are shown learning to work together. They organize themselves into functional groups to make and carry out plans for investigation and to present their findings and recommendations in a group report.

Films and
Filmstrips

- Films** *What Greater Gift*—28 minutes
(NatEdAssn-Prs&RadioSect)
Presents the teacher as a professional person and shows something of the nature of teaching. Stresses that today's teacher needs professional preparation to acquire the understandings and skills essential to good teaching.
- Who Will Teach Your Child*—20 minutes
(McGraw-Hill)
Raises three important questions: (a) How can we attract people of superior ability to teaching? (b) How should these people be trained? (c) Once trained, how can they be persuaded to stay in the profession?
- Filmstrips** *A Core Curriculum Class in Action*—50 frames
(WayneU)
Discusses ways of working in core classes and suggests several procedures which have proved effective.
- How Pupils and Teachers Plan Together*—48 frames
(WayneU)
Discusses various concepts of teacher-pupil planning and shows how one teacher uses this technique.
- Recordings** "Educational Growth Series"
(EdRecords)
30 long-playing records presenting discussions by leading educators on 30 different phases of contemporary education. Designed for use with teachers and administrators.

Sources of Films, Filmstrips and Records Listed in This Chapter

Association Films, Inc.
347 Madison Avenue
New York 17, New York

Athena Films, Inc.
165 West 46th Street
New York 19, New York

Bailey Films, Inc.
6509 De Longpre Avenue
Hollywood 28, California

Brandon Films, Inc.
200 West 57th Street
New York 19, New York

Churchill-Wexler Film Productions
801 North Seward Street
Los Angeles 38, California

Columbia University Press
Center for Mass Communication
413 West 117th Street
New York 27, New York

Coronet Films
Coronet Bldg.
Chicago, Illinois

Educational Recording Services
5922 Abernathy Drive
Los Angeles 45, California

Encyclopaedia Britannica Films,
Incorporated
1150 Wilmette Avenue
Wilmette, Illinois

Educational Film Service
180 North Union Street
Battle Creek, Michigan

Films Incorporated
1150 Wilmette Avenue
Wilmette, Illinois

Jane Franseth
3700 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D. C.

General Pictures Productions, Inc.
621 Sixth Avenue
Des Moines 9, Iowa

Health Publications Institute, Inc.
216 North Dawson Street
Raleigh, North Carolina

Indiana University
Audio-Visual Center
Bloomington, Indiana

International Film Bureau
57 East Jackson Blvd.
Chicago 4, Illinois

Life Camps, Inc.
369 Lexington Avenue
New York 17, New York

March of Time
Distribution by McGraw-Hill

McGraw-Hill Book Company
Text-Film Dept.
330 West 42nd Street
New York 36, New York

Missouri State Teachers Assn.
Columbia, Missouri

National Association of Educational
Broadcasters
University of Illinois
Urbana, Illinois

National Education Association
Division of Adult Education
Service

Dept. of Public Relations
Dept. of Rural Education
Press and Radio Section
1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W.
Washington 6, D. C.

National School Service Institute
Shop 307
Palmer House
Chicago 3, Illinois

New York State Dept. of Commerce
Film Library
112 State Street
Albany 7, New York

Ohio State University
Teaching Aids Laboratory
13 Page Hall
Columbus, Ohio

Simmel-Meservey, Inc.
854 South Robertson Blvd.
Los Angeles 35, California

Teachers College
Columbia University
Bureau of Publications
525 West 120th Street
New York 27, New York

Teaching Film Custodians, Inc.
25 West 43rd Street
New York 36, New York

Tennessee Valley Authority
Film Services
Knoxville, Tennessee

Films and Visual Information
Division
United Nations
New York, New York

Educational Films Dept.
United World Films, Inc.
1445 Park Avenue
New York 29, New York

Government Films Dept.
United World Films, Inc.
1445 Park Avenue
New York 29, New York

University of California at Los
Angeles
405 Hilgard Avenue
Los Angeles 24, California

University of Southern California
Audio-Visual Services, Dept. of
Cinema
3518 University Avenue
Los Angeles 7, California

Wayne University
Audio-Visual Materials Consultation
Bureau
5257 Second Blvd.
Detroit 1, Michigan

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